

THE LIVING AGE.

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Office of the Living Age.

The FIRST STEP is not *always* the only difficulty; it is not so in a *journal*; but it is a difficulty. There is so much to be done in organizing a new office, and preparing so large a number as this, that we have been delayed a week longer than we intended. Finding that we should necessarily be slow, until we can "get the steam up," we determined not to attempt to do more than to show, in a first number, the size, general appearance, and about the *weight* of our matter. So that our readers will not find the gloss of novelty on every article;—not, for instance, on the excellent review of Prescott's Conquest of Mexico;—but we should not have been willing under any circumstances to fail to appropriate so hearty a commendation, by such high authority, of an American author.

We lose much by the absence of MISCELLANY, SCIENCE, ART, OBITUARY, which will be regular heads in our work; and also by not including any English political speculations—or even the slight view of domestic affairs which comes within our plan.

Even as it is, we publish before we are quite prepared, and shall be obliged to delay our second number till the 25th—making an interval of a fortnight.

We hope our Southern and Western correspondents will not give us up because we have *annexed* New England. We cannot agree to the dissolution of the union which has subsisted between us for so many years. It is to their advantage that we should have the most favorable post for our army of observation, that is, our printing-office. We shall here receive the foreign periodicals earliest;—we shall have the best communication with western New York, and with the countries bordering on the lakes (north as well as south;) and we hope that we shall receive a kindly welcome to many new post-offices in this part of the country. No time will be lost in the transmission of the work to distant subscribers, and the advantage of appearing four times as often as before will make our matter fresher than it was in the Museum, even to Philadelphia subscribers. We beg leave to borrow for a moment from our friend the New York Albion his motto, "COLUM, NON

ANIMUM, MUTANT, QUI TRANS MARE CURRENT;"—which means, when done into English, that we are as desirous of continuing and increasing our business to the south and west as ever.

As we go to press we hear the noise of the steamer's arrival, and that our periodicals are on board, but we cannot use them for this number.

We shall have abundant time and opportunity for treating of the matter of *Texas*, on its rebound from Europe in about a month. But we wish to say a few words in the mean time. Finally, and we hope not dishonorably, we shall probably be united to that territory, and the coasters of New England will have a *home voyage* equal in length to a passage to Europe. Apart from the constitutional question—and the still more important point of good faith to Mexico—the principal excitement relates to the matter of slavery. The National Intelligencer has an article addressed to *Southern* readers, in which it gives very good reasons for supposing that the effect of annexation will be to draw a large part of the population from Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri—and that the vacated lands will be settled by emigration from Pennsylvania and other free states, and cultivated by free labor; and that these states may be expected to become free states. This is our opinion, based upon some knowledge of the process which has already begun there. Besides this, it appears by Mr. Clay's letter, that not more than half of Texas itself is fit for slave labor;—and this consideration, as he well observes, may lessen the avidity of the south, and the opposition of the north, so far as these feelings are founded upon political considerations. We do not believe that the acquisition of Texas will increase the political power of the slave states—and we hope that the whole matter may be considered on its own merits.

That England would take Texas, if it could be quietly accomplished, we doubt not. But that could not be done without war with us, and we hope that for that she has no more disposition than we have. We need not fear any rival: the bride is very willing, and we think will be constant: we shall have time for a regular marriage; and need not disgrace ourselves by a runaway match.

From the Quarterly Review.

Narrative of the Discoveries on the North Coast of America, effected by the Officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, during the years 1836—39. By THOMAS SIMPSON, Esq. 8 vo. London; 1843.

THIS, the last page in the history of the British arctic exploration, is a melancholy one; for though the task undertaken was gallantly and successfully accomplished, the publication is posthumous, and the adventurous author lived not to wear the laurels so honorably won. His own recital is one which must be read by his countrymen with satisfaction, only impaired by regret for his melancholy and mysterious fate. Its style, remarkable even beyond that of his recent predecessors for concision, is, like theirs, of that simple and unpretending character which best becomes the narrative of real enterprise and endurance. The achievements it records place the author's name on the long list of British worthies which begins with Frobisher. The utility of such achievements may indeed be questioned. To what purpose are the realms of all but eternal winter invaded by such repeated incursions? Why expose the nose of man to the blast of the barrens, with the thermometer at 60° below zero: and when government, weary of its efforts, abandons the task, why should officials of the Hudson's Bay Company exchange their proper functions as purveyors of peltry for those of navigators and geographers? The answer to all such utilitarian interrogatories rises spontaneously to the lips of every one who takes an interest either in the advancement of science or the honor of England. We are indeed no longer lured, like our ancestors, by the prospect of commercial advantages from a north-western communication with Japan or Cathay; but, without condescending to argue the question, we regret no past, we shall grudge no future expenditure, whether of money or heroism, which may have contributed, or hereafter may contribute, to the final discharge of one of Great Britain's proper functions, the survey of the coast-line of North America. This primary object attained, it will yet remain to be shown that the North Pole itself is inaccessible, and that the difficulties of a north-west passage are insurmountable by British navigators. On both these questions we venture to refer our readers to our article, of the year 1840, on Wrangell's expedition, vol. lxvi. p. 444.

Meanwhile the Franklins, the Backs, and the Simpsons have left but little to be achieved towards the accomplishment of the coast survey. The extent of the hiatus remaining on our maps will be best understood by a reference to Mr. Simpson's instructions and the objects embraced in his enterprise. We call them Mr. Simpson's instructions in virtue of his authorship, and without fear of exciting any jealousy on the part of

the able and veteran chief of the expedition, Mr. Dease, who appears to have conceded to his youthful subordinate, when occasion permitted, precedence in labor and fatigue, as well as in the scientific operations of the expedition, which were entirely in Mr. Simpson's hands. Mr. Dease's merits and services are well known to the readers of Franklin and Back. The first object indicated in the instructions issued by the Hudson's Bay Company Directors, was the completion of that part of the coast survey to the westward of the Mackenzie River which had been left unfinished by Franklin and Beechey in 1826. Such of our readers as have not recently pored over the additions to our arctic maps, contributed by successive expeditions, have to be reminded that in that year a combined operation was conducted, from the Pacific by Captain Beechey, from the mouth of the Mackenzie River by Captain Franklin, in the hope that the two parties might meet somewhere on the coast. They failed in effecting their junction, but how nearly they succeeded, the following dates and positions will show.

On the 18th of August, the barge of Captain Beechey's vessel, the Blossom, quitted that ship off Icy Cape, and on the 22d, reached longitude 156° 21' W., some 120 miles to the eastward of their point of departure. Hence, after being embedded for some days in ice, and after her commander, Mr. Elson, had made up his mind to abandon her and return on foot, she was fortunately extricated, and made sail again to rejoin the Blossom on the 25th. On the 16th of August, Captain Franklin reached longitude 138° 52' W.; and on the 17th, the weather cleared sufficiently to allow him, as he believed, to ascertain the position of a point of land to the westward, which he named after Captain Beechey; at which point he writes, longitude 149° 27', "our discoveries terminated." "Could I have known," he continues, "or by any possibility imagined, that a party from the Blossom had been at the distance of only 160 miles from me, no difficulties, no dangers, no discouraging circumstances, should have prevailed upon me to return." It is a satisfaction to know that, in Sir John Franklin's own opinion, founded on subsequent information, the attempt would have been fruitless, and probably fatal to all concerned. This interval, therefore, of somewhat less than 7° of longitude (averaging 23 miles to a degree,) was all that, since 1826, remained to complete the survey from Mackenzie River westward to the Pacific; and that completion was indicated in the instructions as the first object of the expedition. It will be seen that it was effectually and speedily accomplished.

To the eastward a wider field was open to conjecture and discovery. In 1826, while Franklin was working to the west, his admirable coadjutor Richardson had surveyed the interval between the Mackenzie and Coppermine rivers. In 1834 Captain Back had descended the Tlewocho, or

Great Fish River, to its estuary; but he had been able to survey but little of the neighboring coast in either direction; and, with the exception of this point, the region between the 115th and 83d degrees of longitude, from the Coppermine River to the offshoot, called Melville Peninsula, was still unexplored. It would appear from the instructions that the exploration of this interval to its full eastward extent did not enter into the immediate contemplation of the directors. The party is merely instructed, starting from the Coppermine, to reach, if possible, the scene of Captain Back's discoveries; deciding, as in case of success it must, on its way the question at issue between Sir John Ross and Sir George Back, whether Boothia, the land so named by the former officer, be a peninsula joined on to the main land to the west of the Tlewocho, or whether, as Back opined, a strait existed which had escaped Ross's observation. It will be seen that Mr. Simpson more than performed the service indicated in this instruction; that, after discovering and passing through the strait suspected by Sir G. Back, and thus disposing of the presumed peninsula, and of Sir J. Ross's famous discovery of a difference of level between the seas on either side, he followed the coast-line to some little extent beyond the point where Back was repelled by the advanced state of the season. From this summary it will be seen that, for some ten degrees of longitude, the coast of the continent still presents a field for further adventure. We have been robbed of one peninsula, but it appears nearly certain that a considerable tract of land, of which the eastern continuous coast has been ascertained by Parry and Franklin, deserves the name it bears of *Melville Peninsula*; that it shoots out to the north for some 5° of latitude, and is joined to the main land by a narrow isthmus near Repulse Bay. This latter fact does not indeed rest as yet on actual observation, but there is every reason to put faith in the Esquimaux accounts, which bring a gulf of the Polar Sea to within 40 or 50 miles of Repulse Bay.

Our author's narrative is prefaced by an interesting though meagre sketch of his biography, by the pen of a surviving brother. The boy is not always father to the man. The transformation of a sickly and timid youth, educated for the Scottish church, into the hardy man who walks fifty miles a-day in snow-shoes, is one of those phenomena which we believe to be quite as common as the instances of juvenile promise and precocious aptitude for a particular career so often traced out by the biographers of eminent men. In 1829, at the age of twenty-one, Mr. Simpson, despairing of early advancement in the Kirk, and averse from the usual resource of private tuition, accepted from the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Mr., now Sir George Simpson—a relative, we presume, but in what degree is not stated—an offer of employment under the Company, and sailed for North America. By the same powerful interest

it appears that he was appointed, in 1836, to the second station in command of the expedition which forms the subject of the present narrative. There can be no doubt that during his apprenticeship he showed qualities which justified his selection, and no one who peruses the record will accuse the governor of nepotism.

To any one acquainted with the numerous works of Mr. Simpson's predecessors, his volume can of course present little attraction in the way of novelty. The incidents, whether of the summer's journey or the winter's residence at one of the Company's forts, admit of little variety, as described either by a Back or a Simpson. The same exertions of fortitude and endurance, the same devices of skill and ingenuity to meet danger in its various forms of river-rapid, of marine ice, of fog, and squall, and current, are required of each successive arctic adventurer; but the simplicity and concision of the present narrative prevents weariness even with these details. There is one fact, evidence of which pervades the volume, and which makes us rise from its perusal with peculiar satisfaction; we mean the truly humanizing and Christian effect of the operations of the Hudson's Bay Company on the aboriginal tribes. The period is not distant when the "*bella plusquam civilia*," which raged between the Hudson's Bay Company and a rival association, reddened the desert with other blood than that of the beaver or musk-ox. The blessings, indeed, usually bestowed by the white Christian on the red heathen are soon enumerated;—fire-arms, fire-water, and the small-pox; but probably in no part of the world had the European invaders set a worse example to the native tribes than here, or enlisted them into more savage contests than those which raged, within the present century, within the dominions and between the subjects of the British crown in North America. It is perhaps useless now to inquire into the relative guilt of the parties engaged, and to attempt to discriminate between aggression and lawful resistance. The true history of such contests would rival in unprofitable tedium the Florentine and Pisan wars of Guicciardini. We know no better picture of the character of the struggle than is to be found in the work of Mr. Ross Cox, a gentleman who from an adventurous trader has become an efficient and trusted officer of the Irish police. His narrative, published in 1830, has scarcely an equal for incident and adventure, unless it be in Mr. Irvine's charming volume, the "*Adventures of the Followers of Columbus*." We shall have occasion to remark, that some of his observations on the habits of native tribes derive confirmation from the volume under review. It is gratifying to us, as Englishmen and Christians, to be able to show the reverse of such a picture. Subsequently to the coalition effected between the two companies in 1821, their system towards the natives appears to have been one which Howard and Wilberforce would have approved, and might have di-

rected. Sufficient proofs of this fact appear at the outset of Mr. Simpson's volume, even in his description, though cursory, of the Red River settlement, from which he started for his journey.

The untiring efforts of the Company's Church establishment, Protestant and Roman Catholic, extend from Labrador to the Pacific—from where the rattlesnake basks in the hot summer of climes westward of the Rocky mountains, to where the Indian ceases to roam, and the Esquimaux becomes the sole representative of humanity. These exertions are not the less creditable if, as Mr. Simpson, we fear truly, states, they are often unrewarded: not always however. In the maritime districts of the far West the Indian character is softened, as he states, by the influences of the Pacific; food is abundant, man congregates in villages, and here the labors of the missionaries promise every success. Even among the wandering hunters of the North the endeavors of the Company to check the supply of spirituous liquors and to instil morality, have not been unavailing. Mr. Simpson says:—

“No stronger proof of the salutary effect of the injunctions of the Company's officers can be adduced than that, while peace and decorum mark the general character of the Northern tribes, bloodshed, rapine, and unbridled lust are the characteristics of the fierce hordes of Assiniboines, Pigeons, Blackfeet, Circees, Fall and Blood Indians who inhabit the plains between the Saskatchewan and Missouri, and are without the pale of the Company's influence and authority.”—p. 19.

Mr. Simpson goes on to describe a reconciliation effected by the sole influence of the Company between the Saulteaux and Sioux nations, till lately inveterate and bloody enemies.

On the 1st of December, 1836, Mr. Simpson quitted the Red River settlement for Athabasca. This preliminary journey, of one thousand two hundred and seventy-seven statute miles, was completed with singular precision on the very day prefixed for its termination, the 1st of February. For the first three days, as far as the Manitobah Lake, the nature of the country and the state of the weather permitted the use of horses and wheel carriages. The remainder of the journey was performed on foot, the baggage being conveyed on sledges drawn by dogs. The author's route enabled him to enjoy the seasonable hospitality of three of the Company's stations between the Red River and the Athabaskan station, Fort Chipewyan, destined for his residence till the period when returning spring should enable him to effect the descent of the Coppermine River.

The first point decided on at this station was, that instead of building, according to the letter of their instructions, one large boat for their future expedition, they should construct two of smaller dimensions; a measure to which Mr. Simpson attributes the ultimate safety and success of the party. This portion of the author's narrative exhibits further gratifying evidence of the influence of the Com-

pany on the character of the Chipewyan Indians; and of the establishment of friendly relations between this race and the Esquimaux. The wanton and relentless massacre of the latter, described by Hearne, is a specimen of the former habits of the natives, conspicuous by its contrast to the present state of things; and the regulations of the Company for the prevention of the sale of spirits, and for the supply of necessities to the Indian, seem admirable in effect as well as intention.

The expedition set sail from Athabasca on the 1st of June. On the 10th it reached the Great Slave Lake, where, for eleven weary days, it suffered provoking detention by the ice, and it was not till the 29th that it entered the great River Mackenzie. Fort Good Hope, situated in lat. 66° 16', the most northerly station of the Company, was reached on the 5th of July, and at 4 P. M. of the 9th, the Arctic Ocean burst on the view of the party. The expedition plodded its westward way along the coast surveyed by Franklin in 1826, meeting and overcoming the usual difficulties of such a route, and holding friendly but cautious intercourse with various families of Esquimaux, till it reached Franklin's Return Reef on the 23d. The weather here became stormy, and the temperature such as to bring the winter-dresses of the party into requisition. The ice drove them occasionally almost beyond sight of the coast, but one happy run of twenty-five hours effected nearly half the distance between the point reached by Franklin and the Point Barrow, from which Captain Beechey's barge returned in 1826. In this interval the mouths of two considerable rivers were discovered. Of one of these, named by the party the Colville, Mr. Simpson remarks (p. 171): “That it separates the Franklin and Pelly mountains, the last seen by us, and probably flows in a long course through a rich fur country and unknown tribes on the west side of the Rocky mountains.” Mr. Simpson thinks that it is probably identical with a river of which Mr. Campbell, one of the most adventurous of the Company's servants, who has pushed its establishments into the Rocky mountains and to the confines of the Russian territory, received accounts from the natives; if so, it has a course of at least 1000 English miles. It appears that Mr. Campbell, in 1839, narrowly escaped massacre and starvation at the hands of the Nahanie Indians, but that his future operations are likely to be facilitated by a transaction with the Russian Governor, the eminent Baron Wrangel, by which the Russian line of coast as far as Cape Spencer is leased to the Company. On the 28th they hauled up their boats on a cape, in longitude 154°, which they named after Governor Simpson. The ice now rapidly accumulated, and on the 31st Mr. Simpson writes:—“From the extreme coldness of the weather and the interminable ice, the further advance of our boats appeared hopeless. In four days we had only made good as many miles, and in the event of a late return to the Mackenzie, we had every

reason to apprehend being set fast in Bear Lake river, or at least at Fort Franklin, which would have been ruinous to our future plans. I therefore lost no time in imparting to Mr. Dease my desire of exploring the remainder of the coast to Point Barrow on foot. In order to secure the safe retreat of the party, he handsomely consented to remain with the boats; and as Point Barrow was still distant only two degrees of longitude, ten or twelve days were considered sufficient for my return." The author therefore, selecting five companions, started on his pedestrian expedition on the 1st of August. While the boats had been forcing their way through the shore ice to Cape Simpson, the appearance of the ice to seaward had been so smooth and solid that the party had longed for horses and carioles to drive at once to Point Barrow. Our author could not, indeed, resort to this expedient to facilitate the interesting labor of the remaining interval of unexplored coast. He could not call a coach, but he did better, for finding the sea open he called an oomiak—one of the large family-boats of the Esquimaux which bear that name. The incident of his meeting with the family which supplied him with the loan of this invaluable conveyance was certainly one of the most fortunate of his journey. The taste for tobacco, acquired from intercourse with the Russians, was a passport to their good graces. Among other mutual civilities Mr. Simpson exchanged his travelling service of plate, consisting of a tin pan, for a platter made out of a mammoth tusk, as appropriate to his daily mess of pemmican as pewter to the draught beloved by metropolitan coalheavers. The Esquimaux suffered him without scruple to select the best of three oomiaks for his purpose. These boats float in half a foot of water, and the one selected bounded gallantly over the high waves of an inlet five miles wide, which would have cost him a weary march to circumvent by land. Disregarding the portentous appearance of young ice and the landward flight of wild fowl, omens of approaching winter, and occasionally carrying their light craft over the older ice, they hurried onward to their goal, and reached it with triumph and gratitude on the morning of the 4th.

Point Barrow, henceforth famous as the focus to which British enterprise from west and east has successfully converged, is described as a long, low spit of gravel, some five miles across. It appears to be a place of considerable resort: a kind of Brighton to the Esquimaux, a summer camp, a winter burrow, and a fashionable burying-place. Mr. Elson, in 1826, had been deterred, by the hostile demeanor of the natives, from attempts at intercourse; but Mr. Simpson was bolder, and though the natives were numerous, and their demonstrations at first suspicious, he opened with them a brisk and friendly intercourse, exchanging the ever current coin of tobacco for seal-skin boots, water-proof shirts of seals' entrails, ivory toys, &c. Dances followed, performed by Ceritos in deer-

skin unmentionables; and it was not till Mr. Simpson launched again on the ocean, averting his prow reluctantly from a lane of open water which invited him to Behring's Straits, that an attempt to steal his paddles, and some appearance of a disposition to misdirect his course, afforded any ground for apprehending bad intentions. He was soon joyfully received by the party from whom he had borrowed his frail but buoyant and effective conveyance; and as he required its further use, four of them readily consented to accompany him in their canoes. These people displayed acute sensibility to the power of music, listening with delight to the French and Highland boat-songs of the party. This sensibility is shared by the Indian tribe of Loucheux, but strange to say, is not found among their neighbors the Chipewayans. These distinctive peculiarities among races in juxtaposition are interesting, and not confined to savage tribes. We doubt whether, in this respect of musical faculty, the Loucheux differ more from the Chipewayans than do the natives of the hilly districts of Lancashire and Derbyshire from those of some neighboring counties. In discussing the origin of the native tribes, Mr. Simpson (after attributing, as we think, on very questionable grounds, and differing with his predecessors in discovery, an European origin to the Esquimaux) enumerates several distinct families of Indians, whom he supposes to have migrated from Asia, but who have preserved the most decided differences of language and customs. He mentions the practice prevalent in New Caledonia of burning the dead, and of subjecting the widow to various degrading and painful observances, which probably indicate an Hindoo affinity, though not extending to the suttee of Hindostan. Mr. Ross Cox had the opportunity of observing this practice, which we believe the influence of the Company has since nearly abolished. We have lately seen it stated that in the Marquesas Islands the ocean is substituted for the pile, and the widow is sunk with the corpse of her partner. With all respect for the philosophers of the last century, who endeavored to set up the superiority of savage over civilized man, we prefer the more cumbrous contrivance of jointure, with all its delays to impatient lovers and burthens on heirs.

Mr. Simpson was certainly as fortunate in avoiding collision with the natives as in procuring assistance from them; but the measure of proceeding with so small a party was, with reference to them, one of extreme hazard. The usual source of collision is the inability of the savage to resist temptation to pilfer. We have seen that at Point Barrow this risk occurred. Mr. Dease also, while waiting the return of the party, had to protect himself from similar attempts. Man hates and fears those whom he has injured. Mr. Simpson justly observes, that should the Russians ever furnish the Esquimaux with fire-arms, the day of discovery with small parties will be over. This was,

however, the only juncture at which the natives were met with in force sufficient to create danger; and though it was certainly a critical one, the object in view was one of those which justify a rush at the fence without a scrutiny into the possible ditch at the other side.

While the operations above described were in progress, a party, left behind at Fort Good Hope, had ascended the Bear Lake River, and established themselves on the lake of that name to prepare the winter residence of the expedition. The ascent of the stream, however, had been one of difficulty, conducted between impending walls of ice, in some instances forty feet high. Thirty miles of such navigation had cost a fortnight's labor, and the passage of the lake itself was scarcely less difficult. It was not till the 17th of August, the day on which the coasting party reëntered the Mackenzie River, that the building party reached the scene of its labors, named Fort Confidence. Mr. Simpson's arrival here occurred on the 29th of September. They found their simple and diminutive log dwellings finished as well as the scanty materials of the country allowed, but miserably inadequate to the climate. An express soon after reached them, conveying, among other intelligence, that of Sir G. Back's intended expedition to Wager Inlet, and affording hopes of a meeting with that officer in the course of the summer, which were frustrated by the well-known failure of his gallant efforts. The incidents of the winter residence demand little comment. From the 11th of November to the end of January the temperature ranged from 32° to 33° below zero. Occasionally, however, it descended to 50° ; and when at 49° the author cast a bullet of quicksilver, which, fired from a pistol at ten paces, passed through an inch plank. The students of Liebig will not be surprised to hear that, when abundance permitted, the daily ration of an individual was from eight to twelve pounds of venison. On some occasions it appears that the allowance to the Company's servants has been fourteen pounds of moose or buffalo. We apprehend that bone is included, but the amount is yet enormous, as compared with the consumption of man in temperate climates. The great chemist clearly explains why this large amount of solid and nitrogenized food should be not only innocent but salutary under an arctic temperature. How far, however, it be necessary, and how great the addition desirable for due enjoyment, or essential to the healthy condition of the frame, apart from the adventitious consequences of habit, may be doubted. We have at least reason to doubt that the officers of these expeditions, whose education and habits removed them from the influences of idleness and mere sensuality, have felt and had occasion to satisfy any inordinate cravings. Experience and theory alike condemn the use of spirituous liquors as aids to exertion in these climates.*

* We have been assured that in the Russian expedition

The 11th of March exhibited the greatest degree of cold observed. A spirit thermometer, more scrupulous than its fellows, stood at 60° , an older one at 66° .

Had Mr. Simpson's ardent mind and powerful frame been totally unoccupied during his long and wearisome detention, he might have been driven to the remedy which our French neighbors accuse us of adopting for low spirits, and have committed an appropriate suicide with a quicksilver bullet. He was not, however, driven to this resource. His winter excursions, on Great Bear Lake and the neighboring barrens, exceeded a thousand miles. On the 27th of March he set out, with two men and four dogs, to explore the country between Bear Lake and the Coppermine, their intended pathway to the sea. Buried in the snow-drift of a north-easter, scarcely broken by the screen of a few dwarf spruces, the author naturally felt it difficult to comprehend how people could perish in an English snow-storm in the hot desert of Salisbury Plain, or the tropical regions of Shap Fell.

Indian education begins early. Lewis and Clarke describe equestrians of some two years old using both whip and bridle with vigor and effect. An unweaned member of an Indian family reached Fort Confidence on snow shoes two feet in length:—

"I must not," says Mr. Simpson, "close this part of the narrative without bestowing a just encomium on the generally docile character of the natives of Great Bear Lake. They soon become attached to white men, and are fond of imitating their manners. In our little hall I have repeatedly seen the youngsters who were most about us get up from their chairs, and politely hand them to any of our people who happened to enter. Some of them even learned to take off their caps in the house, and to wash instead of greasing their faces. Their indulgent treatment of their women, who indeed possess the mastery, was noticed by Sir J. Franklin. I wish I could speak as favorably of their honesty and veracity."—p. 243.

The next great object of Mr. Simpson's instructions was, as we have stated, to trace the unexplored interval from Franklin's point Turnagain to the Tlewocho estuary. For this object he was to reach the coast by the Coppermine River, with the choice, as far as his instructors could give it, of spending one or two seasons on the attempt, and of returning by whichever of the two rivers he might prefer. He started on the 6th of June, ascended the Dease River, crossed the Dismal Lakes on the still solid ice, partly with the assistance of sails, and launching on the Kendal River reached the confluence of that stream with the Coppermine on the 20th. The rapids of the Coppermine made of the descent and ascent of that river perhaps the two most critical operations of the expedition. Franklin had descended them in July, when at their summer level; they were now to Khiva, those who, avoiding the use of spirits, confined themselves to tea, alone survived.

in spring flood, but skill and nerve brought the party through. We extract the following passage :—

"The day was bright and lovely as we shot down rapid after rapid ; in many of which we had to pull for our lives to keep out of the suction of the precipices, along whose base the breakers raged and foamed with overwhelming fury. Shortly before noon we came in sight of the Escape Rapid of Franklin, and a glance at the overhanging cliffs told us that there was no alternative but to run down with full cargo. In an instant we were in the vortex ; and, before we were aware, my boat was borne towards an isolated rock which the boiling surge almost concealed. To clear it on the outside was no longer possible ; our only chance of safety was to run between it and the lofty eastern cliff. The word was passed, and every breath was hushed. A stream, which dashed down upon us over the brow of the precipice more than a hundred feet in height, mingled with the spray that whirled upwards from the rapid, forming a terrific shower-bath. The pass was about eight feet wide, and the error of a single foot on either side would have been instant destruction. As, guided by Sinclair's consummate skill, the boat shot safely through those jaws of death, an involuntary cheer arose."—p. 258.

If it had appeared strange to Mr. Simpson, with his thermometer at 50°, that people should perish of cold in England, during this performance he must have been equally at a loss to account for the destruction of life which so often used to attend the shooting of Old London Bridge.

From the 1st to the 17th of July the party were detained by the ice at the mouth of the Coppermine. From the latter date to the 19th of August they were occupied in struggling along the coast to the point reached by Franklin in 1821, and here the prospect before them showed that they had drawn a blank in the lottery of arctic summers. On the 16th of August Franklin had seen a perfectly open sea from this point. Before them now, to the eastward, lay an unbroken barrier of ice, glittering with snow, evidently destined soon to unite with the new formation of approaching winter. Behind them the disjointed masses through which they had forced their way kept closing in under the pressure of violent gales. Mr. Simpson, under these discouraging circumstances, again decided on the experiment of a pedestrian journey of exploration for some ten days with seven of the party, to be followed by Mr. Dease with the remaining five men in one of their two boats, should wind and weather so far change as to permit. This enterprise was well rewarded. Franklin's furthest point was passed on the 21st. From a cape named after that officer, a little beyond that point, land was seen twenty or twenty-five miles to the northward, and stretching from west to north-east. Was this land insular or continental,—were the party coasting a bay or the shore of a continuous sea ? This interesting question was solved on the 23d, on which day Mr. Simpson writes :—

"The coast led somewhat more to the north-

ward. The travelling was exceedingly painful. We, however, advanced with spirit, all hands being in eager expectation respecting the great northern land, which seemed interminable. Along its distant shore the beams of the declining sun were reflected from a broad channel of open water ; while on the coast we were tracing the ice lay still immovable, and extended many miles to seaward. As we drew near in the evening an elevated cape, land appeared all round, and our worst fears seemed confirmed. With bitter disappointment I ascended the height, from whence a vast and splendid prospect burst suddenly upon me. The sea, as if transformed by enchantment, rolled its free waves at my feet, and beyond the range of vision to the eastward. Islands, of various shape and size, overspread its surface ; and the northern land terminated to the eye in a bold and lofty cape, bearing east-north-east, thirty or forty miles distant, while the continental coast trended away south-east. I stood in fact on a remarkable headland at the eastern outlet of an ice-obstructed strait. On the extensive land to the northward I bestowed the name of our most gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria. Its eastern visible extremity I called Cape Pelly, in compliment to the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the promontory where we encamped Cape Alexander, after an only brother, who would give his right hand to be the sharer of my journeys."

With these discoveries Mr. Simpson for this season was forced to content himself :—

"They were not in themselves," he observes, "unimportant ; but their value was much enhanced by the disclosure of an open sea to the eastward, and the suggestion of a new route—along the southern coast of Victoria Land—by which that open sea might be attained while the shores of the continent were yet environed by an impenetrable barrier of ice, as they were this season."—p. 300.

On the 29th they rejoined Mr. Dease and his party, who had continued ice-bound till the day previous, when he wisely judged it too late to attempt progress by sea to the eastward.

The course now adopted by the party is best explained and vindicated in Mr. Simpson's own words :—

"The bad weather and advanced season now rendered every one anxious to return to winter quarters, and I reluctantly acquiesced in the general sentiment ; but for doing so I had reasons peculiar to myself. I considered that we could not now expect to reach Back's Great Fish River ; that by exploring a part only of the unknown coast intervening, our return to the Coppermine must be so long protracted as to preclude the possibility of taking the boats up that bad river ; and that by abandoning them on the coast to the Esquimaux we excluded the prospect of accomplishing the whole by a third voyage, with the benefit perhaps of a more propitious season. Three great travellers, Hearne, Franklin, and Richardson, had successively pronounced the ascent of the Coppermine, above the Bloody Fall, to be impracticable with boats ; and our people, recollecting only the violence and impetuosity of our descent, entertained the same opinion. Fully aware of the great importance of this point to any future operations, I had with a careful eye inspected every part of the river, and formed in my own mind the following

conclusions respecting the upward navigation :— 1st. That in a river of that size there must always be a *lead* somewhere, of depth enough for *light* boats. 2d. That the force of the rapids would be found much abated, and that with strong ropes the worst of them might be surmounted. 3d. From the fury of the breakers in June I inferred the existence at no great depth of a narrow projecting ledge of rock that, bared by the falling of the waters, would afford footing to the towing-party, without which the ascent indeed must have baffled all our efforts.”—p. 303.

These views proved in the sequel to be just and well-founded. We refer our readers to the narrative to learn how highly indeed the skill and courage of the party were taxed to demonstrate the soundness of the above conclusions. Every danger, however, was baffled, and every difficulty surmounted; and on the 14th the party regained Fort Confidence in safety.

The summer of 1839 proved more favorable to the task of discovery than its predecessor. On reaching the Coppermine, on the 19th of June, the party found that the ice had ceased to drift down on the 16th, ten days earlier than the last year. The rapids were passed with far greater facility; and on reaching Cape Barrow, on the 18th of July, they found the wide extent of Coronation Gulf partially open. Threading the ice across the inlet to Cape Franklin, they met with, instead of the unbroken barrier which had foiled them last year, an open channel two miles wide along the main. On the 8th of August they had followed the coast as far as the 90th degree of longitude; i. e. some 11 degrees to the eastward of their point of departure. On the 10th, Mr. Simpson writes :—

“ We proceeded north-eastward all day among the islands, and some began to apprehend that we had lost the continent altogether, till in the evening we opened a strait running in to the southward of east, while the rapid rush of the tide from that quarter left no longer any room to doubt the neighborhood of an open sea leading to the mouth of Back's Great Fish River. * * * I must candidly acknowledge,” he continues, “ that we were not prepared to find so southerly a strait leading to the estuary of the Great Fish River, but rather expected *first* to double Cape Felix of Captain James Ross, towards which the coast had been latterly trending. The extensive land, on which that conspicuous cape stands, forms the northern shore of the strait through which we passed on the 11th; and which led us, the same afternoon, by an outlet only three miles wide to the much desired eastern sea. That glorious sight was first beheld by myself from the top of one of the high limestone islands; and I had the satisfaction of announcing it to some of the men, who, incited by curiosity, followed me thither. The joyful news was soon conveyed to Mr. Dease, who was with the boats at the end of the island, about half a mile off; and even the most desponding of our people forgot for the time the great distance we should have to return to winter quarters, though a wish that a party had been appointed to meet us somewhere on the Great Fish River, or even at Fort Reliance, was frequently expressed.”

A strong wind from the westward rapidly extricated the party from the labyrinth of islands which had long impeded their voyage; and on the 13th, says Mr. Simpson, “ On doubling a very sharp point, that offered a lee spot for the boats, I landed, and saw before me a perfect sandy desert. It was Back's Point Sir C. Ogle that we had at length reached !”

Here then the author's performance of his duty, as designated by his instructions, was complete; but he was naturally desirous to push his exploration as far to the eastward beyond Sir G. Back's limit as the season would permit. He still considered it possible that the isthmus, the existence of which in the region assigned to it by Sir John Ross, he had disproved, might be found further eastward. The men assented without a murmur to the unexpected prolongation of their hard service—a circumstance which says much for them, and for the commanders who had won their attachment. The Great Fish River and the other streams which reach this coast flow through unwooded regions; a fact which much aggravates the condition of the coast navigator, who finds no drift-wood for fuel, and on his shivering bivouac is reduced to uncooked pemmican and cold water for his diet. The latter luxury itself was scarce among the islands; strong north-east winds prevailed, and one of Sir G. Back's stores, on Montreal Island, to which they were directed by M'Kay, one of that officer's expedition, afforded nothing but pemmican alive with maggots, and chocolate rotten with five years' decay. In the teeth of all these difficulties they persevered, running over from Montreal Island to the eastern coast, to a cape somewhat north of Cape Hay, the extreme point seen by Sir G. Back, to which they gave the name of Britannia. Hence, with a fair wind and tossing sea, they made a run of thirty miles to a cape which they christened after the name of Lord Selkirk; and some three miles further, on the 20th, the return of the north-east wind forced them into the mouth of a small river.

“ It was now,” says Mr. Simpson, “ quite evident to us, even in our most sanguine mood, that the time was come for commencing our retreat to the distant Coppermine River, and that any further foolhardy perseverance could only lead to the loss of the whole party, and also of the great object which we had so successfully achieved. The men were therefore directed to construct another monument in commemoration of our visit; while Mr. Dease and I walked to an eminence three miles off, to see the further trending of the coast. Our view of the low main shore was limited to about five miles, when it seemed to turn off more to the right. Far without lay several lofty islands, and in the northeast, more distant still, appeared some high blue land; this, which we designated Cape Sir J. Ross, is in all probability one of the south-eastern promontories of Boothia. We could therefore hardly doubt being now arrived at that large gulf uniformly described by the Esquimaux as containing many islands, and with numerous indentations, running down to the southward till it ap-

proaches within forty miles of Repulse and Wager Bays. The exploration of such a gulf to the strait of the Fury and Hecla would necessarily demand the whole time and energies of another expedition, having some point of retreat much nearer to the scene of operations than Great Bear Lake; and we felt assured that the Honorable Company who had already done so much in the cause of discovery, would not abandon their munificent work till the precise limits of this great continent were fully and finally established.—p. 376.

After all that has been accomplished, the *nil actum reputans* of Juvenal would be an exaggeration, but we confess we sympathize with the hope here expressed, and are satisfied that the Company might easily accomplish the remaining task, probably by making one of their establishments on the eastern coast,—Fort Churchill, for instance,—the starting place or base of their operation. The mouth of the stream which bounded the last career of the admirable little boats, and received their name, the Castor and Pollux, lies in latitude $68^{\circ} 28' 23''$ North, longitude $94^{\circ} 14'$ West; or, adopting Back's longitude, which for some reason Simpson could not reconcile with his own, in longitude $93^{\circ} 7' 30''$. The expedition, on its return, instead of pursuing the shores of the main land, coasted the southern shores of Boothia, and their new discovery, Victoria Land; the former for nearly sixty-seven miles, to within fifty-seven miles of Ross's pillar, and within ninety miles of the magnetic pole. Their run along Victoria Land amounted to upwards of one hundred and seventy miles. Their winds were favorable, their navigation, though sometimes rough for craft so light, was prosperous, and on the 10th, having triumphantly crossed the strait of fifty miles, to Cape Barrow, they revelled once more in the luxury of a drift-wood fire, to which they had been strangers since July. The party regained the Coppermine River on the 16th of September, after the longest voyage yet performed by boats in the Polar sea—in all one thousand six hundred and thirty-one statute miles.

It would remain for us to notice the sad and mysterious termination of a life so distinguished by enterprise and honorable service, but the task is distressing; and, as we could do nothing towards elucidating the truth, we leave our readers to read for themselves in the preface the few ascertained particulars of the occurrence. It is more than enough for us to know that Mr. Simpson perished by violence on his way from the Red River settlement towards England. It is just possible that some tardy confession, or some word spoken in the veracity of intoxication, may confirm our own impression that, after killing two of his half-breed companions in self-defence, he was murdered in revenge. Till then the possibility may be, however reluctantly, admitted, of the tale as told by the survivors, that insanity was the cause of the catastrophe. More fortunate, in one sense, than Parke or Hudson, he has left behind him his own

record of his own achievements. And we cannot close the volume without once more remarking on its literary merit. For judicious selection of topics and incidents, for clearness and simplicity of description, it is the model of a diary, and like the masculine and modest character of the man, reflects honor on Mr. Simpson's venerable Alma Mater, King's College, Aberdeen.

From the Quarterly Review.

History of the Conquest of Mexico, with a Preliminary View of the Ancient Mexican Civilization, and the Life of the Conqueror, Hernando Cortes. BY WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT. 3 vols. 8 vo. London; 1843.

In his excellent history of Ferdinand and Isabella, Mr. Prescott had the advantage of entering upon ground not preoccupied by any of the great modern historians. He now ventures to measure his strength with the Spaniard De Solis, and with Robertson. De Solis, whose swelling style was so peculiarly congenial to the Spanish ear, by the higher merits of his work, his skilful arrangement, his animation and dramatic power, as well as by the inextinguishable interest of his story, commanded considerable popularity even in the English translation. The narrative of Robertson has all the charm of his inimitable style. The conquest of Mexico is but one chapter, indeed, in his history of America; but it seems to have been labored with peculiar care, till every vestige of labor has disappeared, and the story flows on with the ease and gracefulness of a romance.

Yet ancient Mexico, and the adventures of her Spanish conquerors, may still afford full scope for the labor and the genius of an historian, who may aspire to tell the story in a more Christian and enlightened spirit than the bigot De Solis; on a more extended scale, and with a full command of the stores of knowledge which have accumulated since the time both of De Solis and of Robertson. If, indeed, we are to judge from the astonishment expressed by some persons, who at least might be supposed familiar with such works as Robertson's, at the discoveries of Mr. Stephens among the ancient cities in Mexico and the adjacent provinces, it might appear full time to revive the history of the conquest in the public mind. This surprise seemed to imply an utter forgetfulness of the state of the country at the time of the Spanish conquest; that it was not a wild forest wandered over by savage hunters, or a land peopled by simple and naked Caribs; but the seat of more than one comparatively ancient, powerful and wealthy monarchy, containing many large and populous cities, embellished with vast buildings, chiefly temples; and advanced to a high state of what we may venture to call, without pledging ourselves to its origin, Asiatic civilization.

Mr. Prescott possesses high qualifications, and

some peculiar advantages for the execution of such a work. He has a high sense of the obligation of an historian to explore every source of information relating to his subject; to spare neither industry, nor, we may add, expense, in the collection of materials; and his extensive acquaintance with Spanish literature, and the name which he has already established in connexion with Spanish history, have, perhaps, enabled him to command sources of knowledge unattainable by an unknown author. In his disquisitions on the political state and the civilization of the Aztec kingdoms, he is full and copious, without being prolix and wearisome; his narrative is flowing and spirited, sometimes very picturesque; his style has dropped the few Americanisms which still jarred on our fastidious ear in his former work, and is in general pure and sound English. Above all, his judgments are unaffectedly candid and impartial; he never loses sight of the immutable principles of justice and humanity, yet allows to the Spanish conquerors the palliation for their enormities, to be drawn from those deeply-rooted and miscalled Christian principles, which authorized and even sanctified all acts of ambition and violence committed by Europeans and Christians against barbarians and infidels. His general estimate of the character of his hero appears to us singularly just. As an adventurer the bravest, the most enterprising, the most persevering, who set his foot on the shores of America; Cortes was, as a commander, rapid and daring in forming his resolutions; undaunted and resolute in their execution; beyond example prompt and fertile in resources; unappalled by the most gigantic difficulties; unshaken by the most disastrous reverses; accomplishing the most inconceivable schemes with forces apparently the most inadequate, and, as he advanced, creating means from what might seem the most hopeless and hostile sources; and with a power of attaching men to his service, which might almost look like magic. He combined under one discipline the rude and reckless adventurer, who began by thinking only of gold, but gradually kindled to the absorbing desire of glory; the jealous enemy who came to overthrow his power, and before long became its most steadfast support; the fiercest and most warlike of the natives, whom he bent not merely into obedient followers, but zealous and hearty allies. Avaricious, yet generous, and never allowing his avarice to interfere with his ambition; with address which borders close on cunning, reading men's hearts and minds, and knowing whom to trust and how far; he was not without humanity, but when war was raging and as peculiar exigences seemed to demand, utterly remorseless and utterly reckless of the extent of carnage, hewing down human life as carelessly as the backwoodsman the forest; and withal as stern a bigot as Spain ever sent forth in cowl or in mail, to propagate the doctrine of the Cross by the Mahometan apostleship of fire and sword.

Mr. Prescott, in his collection of materials for his work, has laid all accessible quarters under contribution. The Spanish archives, which were closed against Dr. Robertson, have been freely opened to him; or rather, we should say, he has had liberal access to the rich collections made by Don Juan Baptista Muñoz, the historiographer of the Indies; to that of Don Vargas Ponce, whose papers were chiefly obtained from the archives of the Indies at Seville; and that of Navarrete, the President of the Academy, whose work on the early discoveries of the Spaniards is well known. These three collections are in the possession of the Royal Academy of Madrid; Mr. Prescott was allowed the selection and transcription of as many as he might choose; and the result has been a mass of MS. documents amounting to eight thousand folio pages. Mexico has furnished some unprinted and some printed documents, among the latter those edited by Bustamante, especially the valuable history of Father Sahagun, which appeared nearly at the same time in Mexico, and in Lord Kingsborough's great collection of Mexican antiquities. Mr. Prescott mentions other private libraries and collections, among them that of the Duke of Monteleone, the present representative of Cortes, which have been courteously placed at his command.

Among printed works that of Clavigero had not appeared when Robertson published his history. Clavigero, indeed, professed that the object of his writing was partly to correct the errors of Robertson. Since that time, England and France have sent forth the magnificent volumes of Lord Kingsborough and the French "*Antiquités Mexicaines*," and many of the Muñoz MSS. which have appeared in the translations of M. Ternaux Compans. We have mentioned the history of Father Sahagun. The "*Historia Antiqua*" of Don Mariano Veytia, the executor of Boturini, a most adventurous but injudicious collector of Aztec antiquities, was published in Mexico in 1838. To these printed works Mr. Prescott adds, as his authorities: I. The MS. History of India, by the celebrated Las Casas, the Bishop of Chiapa, a name which commands our highest veneration, yet who wanted some of the first requisites of an historian, impartiality and judgment. The good bishop has all the amiability, all the ardor, and all the prejudice of an Abolitionist. II. The works of the Tezcucan historian, who rejoices in the magnificent name of Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, according to Mr. Prescott, the Livy of Anahuac. These are still in manuscript, but have been consulted by some of the Spanish historians. The *Historia Chichemeca*, the best of his "*Relaciones*," has been rendered into French in Mons. Ternaux Compans's collection. III. The *Historia General de las Indias*, by Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo é Valdez. Oviedo passed some time in the Spanish Indies, in Darien, and afterwards in Hispaniola. On his return to Spain he was appointed "*Chronicler of the Indies*."

It is understood that the Royal Academy of History at Madrid are preparing this work for the press. IV. The History of Tlascala, by Diego Muñoz Camargo. Camargo was a noble Tlascalan *mestee*, and lived in the latter half of the sixteenth century. His work supplies much curious and authentic information respecting the social and religious institutions of the land at the time of the conquest. His patriotism warms as he recounts the old hostilities of his countrymen with the Aztecs; and it is singular to observe how the detestation of the rival nations survived their common subjection under the Castilian yoke.

Yet it is chiefly on the institutions, manners, and polity of the kingdoms of the New World, that these masses of published and unpublished documents throw light. The great facts of the invasion and conquest; the life and character of Cortes himself; the triumphs and disasters, the gains and losses, have long been before the world. The principles and motives of these warriors, who were at once too rude and too proud to dissemble or disguise their designs and objects, are manifest from their actions. There is no secret history which is not immediately betrayed by the event. Success or failure reveals the subtlest policy of Cortes. The large works of Herrera and Torquemada contain, in general, a full and accurate account of the actual exploits, dangers, escapes, and victories of the adventurers. The despatches of Cortes, which have been long before the world, show us the course of events as they appeared to the leader himself, and as he wished them to appear before his master and before Europe.* They are bold and honest "Commentaries," for neither would Cortes condescend to, nor feel the slightest desire of concealment; nor would he have found a more favorable hearing with the Emperor or the court of Castile, if he had softened or disguised any of those parts of the history which most offend the moral and Christian feelings of our day. Besides this, we have the frank and gallant, however rugged, Bernal Diaz, chronicling, from recollection it is true, but still with the fidelity of honest pride and the complacent satisfaction of an old soldier, day by day, the occurrences of the whole war; speaking out, without fear or hesitation, the living feelings, the hopes, and even the fears, the passions, the superstitions of the camp. Bernal Diaz avowedly wrote to vindicate for the soldiers of Cortes that share in the common glory, which Gomara, the other great authority for the war, has ascribed too exclusively to the general. Gomara was the chaplain of Cortes on his return to Spain, and derived his information from Cortes himself, (though the book was not written till after his death,) from his family, and from some of the other distinguished actors in the great drama. Yet

after all, the character of Cortes comes out still more strongly in the Chronicle of Diaz. Though Diaz is asserting the independence and voluntary subjection of the soldiers, they are only more manifestly under the despotic rule of the master mind; for that is the most consummate authority which persuades its obedient instruments to imagine that they are free agents. Honest Bernal Diaz seems to have made himself believe that he had a leading voice in the destruction of the ships. It is on this introductory portion of Mexican history, and on the character, institutions, manners, and usages, of the conquered empire, that Robertson's brilliant episode is meagre and unsatisfactory. His calm and philosophic mind was not much alive to the romantic and picturesque; and he was so afraid of being led away by the ardent imagination of some of the older authorities, who had been dazzled by the external splendor of the Mexican monarchy, that he was disposed to depreciate to the utmost its real state of advancement. Mr. Prescott has availed himself of his superior advantages, and done more ample and equal justice to the subject. His preliminary view of the Aztec civilization is a full and judicious summary of that which is scattered in numerous, large, and we may add, expensive volumes, those of the printed and unpublished works of the older writers, and the modern publications of Clavigero, of the invaluable Humboldt, and the English and French Mexican Antiquities.

On the great and inexplicable problem as to the origin of this singular state of civilization, Mr. Prescott has wisely declined to enter in the opening chapters of his history: he has reserved the subject for a separate disquisition, in his Appendix. His conclusions are those of a sensible man, and a lover of truth rather than of brilliant theory. Among the great tests and trials of an historian's honesty, and therefore of his due sense of the dignity of his office, is the acknowledgment of ignorance; the steady refusal to admit that as history, which has not sufficient historical evidence. Mr. Prescott sums up the whole discussion thus:—First, the coincidences are sufficiently strong to authorize a belief that the civilization of Anahuac was, in some degree, influenced by that of Eastern Asia. And, secondly, the discrepancies are such as to carry back the communication to a very remote period; so remote, that this foreign influence had been too feeble to interfere materially with the growth of what may be regarded, in its essential features as a peculiar and indigenous civilization.

Unquestionably, the general character of the great Mexican empire has an Asiatic appearance; it resembles the great Tartar or Mongol empires, as they offered themselves to the astonished imaginations of the early Christian missionaries, or the merchant Marco Polo. Montezuma was most like Kubla Khan, or that splendid but evanescent personage, always heard of but never found, the mag-

* A very respectable and useful Translation of these Despatches, by Mr. George Folsom, has been published at New York (1843.) We have availed ourselves of this translation in our extracts.

nificent Prester John. The analogies with Jewish and Christian customs and notions, so fondly sought and so readily believed by religious zeal, (the inspiration which fortunately gave birth to the costly publication of the late Lord Kingsborough, was a fancy about the Jewish origin of the Mexicans,) resolve themselves almost entirely into common or wide-spread Oriental customs and opinions. But when we would derive, according to the most probable theory, the American civilization from Eastern Asia, there remains this insuperable difficulty. To transplant the civilization of one distant country to another, requires either the simultaneous migration of a large body of the people, or a long and regular intercourse, a constant immigration from the parent race. A few adventurers from the most civilized region of the world—accidentally thrown upon a remote shore, or wandering to it through immeasurable tracts of forest, and savanna, and swamp, cut off from all communication with the mother country, and struggling to bring a new land into cultivation—would almost inevitably degenerate, or acquire new habits and usages adapted to their new circumstances. Whether this Tartar, Mongol, or Chinese, or, at any rate, Oriental race, found its way across the Pacific, or slowly descended southward, leaving vestiges of its passage in some of the curious monuments in North America; its preservation of so much of its peculiar character in all the vicissitudes of its fortunes seems scarcely conceivable. And language, which in general, at least in its elemental forms and simplest sounds, is the fine but enduring thread which leads us back to the parent stock, is here utterly broken and lost. If originally Asiatic, or connected with any of the dialects of Eastern Asia, it has diverged away so completely as not to retain a vestige of its origin. In its words, and in its structure, though split up into innumerable dialects—nay, as it should seem, innumerable independent families—the language of New Spain has baffled all the attempts of the most profound and ingenious philologists (and they are not easily baffled) to connect it with any of the tongues of the Old World. Yet either a great length of time, or a total change of social condition, appears absolutely necessary to obliterate every vestige of affiliation from cognate languages; and it is remarkable, that variable usages should survive that which is usually so much less mutable, the elements and the structure of speech. Nor is it unimportant to remark how comparatively recent appears the whole civilization of Anahuac. Even if, as is not improbable, the race who peopled Mexico and Tezeuco were ruder and fiercer tribes, who descended upon an older civilization, and yielded to its subduing influence, (like the shepherds in Egypt or the Tartars in China,) yet that which we are able, on the authority of the earliest traditions, to throw up into the highest antiquity, comes far within the historic times of the Old World. This recent origin effectually cuts

off all possible connexion with the West; even Plato's Atlantis, and the Phœnician voyagers, are tales in comparison of hoary old; and it renders any permanent intercourse with the East, at least with greater empires, highly improbable. Clavigero indeed, who would by no means incline to take a low view of Aztec antiquities, fixes the descent of the Toltecs—the earliest race to whom the vague tradition, which by courtesy is called history, assigns any important influence on the civilization of this part of the New World—in the year 648 of our æra;—the foundation of Mexico, probably far better ascertained, in the year 1325.

Are we not, then, thrown back upon the previous question, whether man at earlier social stages has not a tendency to develop his social being in the same manner? May we not be required by true philosophic investigation, as far as it can lead us, to inquire how far similitude of polity, usage, law, manners, really proves identity of origin, or even remote affiliation; how far certain customs grow, not out of tradition but out of our common nature; how far, in the almost infinite varieties of human culture, there is not, up to a certain point, a necessary uniformity, which ensures a general resemblance, or, at least, by limiting the range of accident, caprice, climate, habit, enforces the adoption of kindred institutions where there is no kindred blood, and no mutual intercourse? So many curious coincidences occur, where it is impossible to imagine either common descent (except from our first parents, or from the ark) or communication; such wayward and fanciful usages, such strange deviations from the ordinary principles and feelings of man, grow up in such distant regions, and such disconnected tribes, that we become extremely cautious in receiving such evidence as showing even the most remote relationship of race. It might seem that human nature has only a limited number of forms in which it can cast its social institutions, and that, however variously it may combine these forms, it is almost impossible but that points of the closest similitude should exist, where there can have been neither imitation nor common tradition.

Yet, while the institutions of the Aztec civilization may have been but the development of the common principles of justice, the necessity of mutual protection and security may have led to the establishment of the monarchical government, distinction of ranks, regular tribunals of law, fixed rules for the tenure of property; the ordinary usages of life, the invention and application of the useful, and indeed necessary arts, may have been the spontaneous, as it were, and but recent evolutions of the common wants and faculties of man: there are some few very remarkable traditions, which can scarcely be traced but to some original connexion with the brotherhood, apparently, of the Asiatic nations. Some of these are religious, the most remarkable of which is that universal one of the Deluge, the authenticity of which seems recog-

nized by Humboldt, and admitted by Mr. Prescott. Most of the others, especially those which show too close a resemblance to Christianity, fall under the suspicion of having been invented, or, at least, of being native traditions, colored into similitude by the zeal of the new converts, anxious to propitiate the favor of their teachers, and fondly welcomed without examination, or after an examination strongly biased by the profound but natural prejudices of the unenlightened monkish teachers.

One or two of the scientific analogies are still more singular, particularly with regard to the Aztec calendar. The system of intercalation may indeed have forced itself upon different peoples, when they had arrived at the knowledge of the time of the sun's annual course; and nature itself might seem to establish, especially in the period of superstition through which all nations seem doomed to pass, that period of mourning which followed the sun's declension, and of rejoicing after the winter solstice, when the lengthening days gave the hope of another revolving year, with all its fruits and blessings. But, in the words of Mr. Prescott, after he has noticed the remarkable analogy of the Mexican cycles of years with those of the Mongol nations,—

"A correspondence quite as extraordinary is found between the hieroglyphics used by the Aztecs for the signs of the days, and those zodiacal signs which the Eastern Asiatics employed as one of the terms of their series. The symbols in the Mongolian calendar are borrowed from animals. Four of the twelve are the same as the Aztec. Three others are as nearly the same as the different species of the animals in the two hemispheres would allow. The remaining five refer to no creature then found in Anahuac."

The note gives the names of the zodiacal signs used as the *names of the years* by the Eastern Asiatics (of the signs of the zodiac the Mexicans probably had no knowledge):—

"Among the Mongols, 1. mouse, 2. ox, 3. leopard (Mantchou, Japanese, &c., tiger,) 4. hare, 5. crocodile (Mantchou and Japanese, dragon,) 6. serpent, 7. hare, 8. sheep (Mantchou, &c., goat,) 9. monkey, 10. hen, 11. dog, 12. hog. In the Mexican signs for the names of the days, we also meet with hare, serpent, monkey, dog. Instead of the leopard, crocodile, and hen, neither of which animals were known in Mexico at the time of the conquest, we find the ocelot, the lizard, and the eagle. The lunar calendar of the Hindoos exhibits a correspondence equally extraordinary. Seven of the terms agree with those of the Aztecs, namely, serpent, cane, razor, path of the sun, dog's tail, house. [Mr. Prescott gives but six.] These terms are still more arbitrarily selected, not being confined to animals."—Vol. iii., p. 345.

We cannot but suspect that all these signs arose out of hieroglyphic or picture writing, but this by no means explains the curious resemblance. There is another point of considerable importance, which tends to show that the more civilized tribes of Southern America were of a different family of mankind from the common savage races of the

islands and continent. The crania disinterred from the sepulchral mounds in those regions, as well as those of the inhabitants of the high plains of the Cordilleras, differ from those of the more barbarous tribes. The ampler forehead intimates a decided intellectual superiority, and bears a close resemblance with that of some of the Mongol tribes. We are inclined to think the habit of burning the dead, familiar to the Mongols and the Aztecs, no very strong evidence of common descent. The departure from the strange habit of burying the dead in a sitting posture, practised, according to Mr. Prescott, by most, if not all, the aborigines from Canada to Patagonia, is a more convincing proof of the independent origin of those more savage races. The latter argument tends, as far as it goes, to establish an identity of race with the Eastern Asiatics; the other singular coincidences of the calendar and the names of the days might possibly be ascribed to the casual visit of a few strangers from the Asiatic coasts, who may have imparted their superior knowledge and their religious traditions. There was, however, no such distinct tradition among the Aztecs, as among the Peruvians, of a Mango Capac, who, suddenly appearing among a barbarous race, from his superior intelligence and knowledge, was hailed with awe and reverence as a deity, as a child of the sun, and to whom is ascribed the whole framework of the social polity, and all which may be called civilization. The Mexican traditions relate to the migration of tribes rather than to the power or influence of individual chiefs or sages, unless perhaps that beneficent God, supposed to have reappeared in the person of the Spaniards.

We have glanced thus rapidly at some of the more prominent points in this curious, but, we must confess, unsatisfactory discussion, because this appears to be the strongest case in history of a spontaneous and indigenous civilization growing up without foreign influence, and within a recent period. Whatever traditions the natives of Anahuac might inherit from their Asiatic origin, if Asia was indeed the cradle of the race, have survived, what seems incredible, the total extinction of every sign of relationship in the language. The only faint traces of etymological resemblance have been found or imagined in the Otomic, the language of one of the most barbarous tribes, which is supposed to offer the nearest analogy, and that with the Chinese. Besides this, it is acknowledged that far the larger part, and that which gives its general Asiatic character to the Mexican civilization, is to all appearance but of late development. Even their legendary or mythic history is modest in its pretensions; neither Mexico nor Tezcuco claim any high or mysterious antiquity. The account of the foundation of both cities, as we have seen, is probable and recent. Let us take a very hasty survey of this introductory chapter of Mexican history.

The Toltecs are the Pelasgians of this civil-

zation of Anahuac. They were an agricultural race, skilled in some of the mechanical arts, and to them are ascribed the buildings of the greatest solidity and magnificence, the monuments of Transatlantic Cyclopean architecture—yet neither they nor their buildings aspire to any formidable age. Even if we ascribe the ruins of Palenque and Uxmal, and some of the structures in the adjacent provinces, described by Mr. Stephens, to this race and to their descendants, there is no considerable difference, either in the style, the form, or the construction, or what we may conjecture to have been their uses, from the buildings found by the Spaniards in the Mexican cities, from the temples and fortresses of the existing people; there is nothing to throw the one upward into a more remote antiquity; nothing like the wide distinction between the architectures of Egypt and Greece, or even between the Pelasgian or Cyclopean masonry and that of the Hellenic tribes. A period of a very few centuries will connect the two races, even if we admit to the utmost the only evidence of a certain degree of antiquity in the older ruins, the growth of trees of enormous size within their precincts, which must have taken root after the buildings had been abandoned either as habitations or places of worship. In all these cases we must know more accurately the ordinary growth of such trees, since some kinds of timber, in that climate and in that soil, are known to increase with extraordinary rapidity.

Mexican history, however, as we have seen, did not scruple to assign, if a vague and uncertain, yet certainly no very remote period for the disappearance of the Toltec population, and the settlement and growth of the Aztec races, who were in possession of the country at the time of the Spanish invasion. The league between the great leading tribes of Mexico, of Tezcuco, and the smaller state of Tlacopan, in which these three kingdoms had combined, is a singular example of a national confederation. The league was both defensive and offensive; and the spoils and conquests torn by the combined forces from their more barbarous neighbors were divided upon a fixed scale. Yet with this dangerous element of jealousy and discord, the league had continued for a considerable period in perfect harmony.

Mexico, when the Spaniards landed, was the leading state in wealth and in power. But Tezcuco had attained to a much higher, and, if we are to credit the native historians, a much more enlightened state of civilization. The most curious and interesting passage in Mr. Prescott's history of the earlier state of Anahuac describes the rise and the reign of the great king of Tezcuco, with whose awful name we shall not appal our reader's eyes or ears till it is absolutely necessary. Whether read as sober history, or as mythic legend, or as a kind of Aztec Cyropedia, it is equally extraordinary, resting as it does on the authority of a native Livy, who, at the beginning of the sixteenth

century, combined into a regular history or histories the hieroglyphics, the songs, and traditions of his native land, as well as the oral testimony of many aged persons. Ixtlilxochitl, whose name we have before noticed, a descendant of the royal race, became interpreter to the viceroy; his high situation gave him command of all the ancient documents in the possession of the Spanish government, to which he added large collections of his own. He wrote in Castilian, and Mr. Prescott observes that "there is an appearance of good faith and simplicity in his writings, which may convince the reader that, when he errs, it is from no worse cause than national partiality." But it would seem almost incredible that, even under the inspiration of the most ardent reverence for his ancestors, the ideal of a Mexican educated under Spanish influence, and living among either statesmen or friars of that period, should take this remarkable form. Our Aztec Livy must indeed have possessed a noble genius, if he could *imagine* some of the social and political institutions which he ascribes to the Numa of Tezcuco.*

The rising fortunes and the civilization of the Acolhuans, who entered the Valley and founded Tezcuco about the close of the twelfth century, were checked and interrupted by the subjugation of the city and territory under the Tepanecs, a kindred but more barbarous tribe:—

"This event took place about 1418; and the young prince, Nezahualcoyotl, the heir to the crown, then fifteen years old, saw his father butchered before his eyes, while he himself lay concealed among the friendly branches of a tree, which overshadowed the spot. His subsequent history is as full of romantic daring and perilous escapes as that of the renowned Scanderbeg, or of the 'young Chevalier.'"—Vol. i., p. 146.

These adventures, of which Mr. Prescott gives a brief but stirring account, terminated with the defeat of the Tecapecs, the death of Maxtla, the last king of their race, the accession of Nezahualcoyotl to his ancestral throne, and the establishment of the federal league between Mexico, Tezcuco, and Tlacopan:—

"The first measure of Nezahualcoyotl, on returning to his dominions, was a general amnesty. It was his maxim, 'that a monarch might punish, but revenge was unworthy of him.' In the present instance he was averse even to punish, and not only freely pardoned his rebel nobles, but conferred on some, who had most deeply offended, posts of honor and confidence. Such conduct was doubtless politic, especially as their alienation was owing, probably, much more to fear of the usurper than to any disaffection towards himself. But there are some acts of policy which a magnanimous spirit only can execute.

* We would observe that the reign of this lawgiver of Tezcuco had been before given at some length, not to say prolixity, by Torquemada, in his "Monarchia Indiana;" and the resemblance of the incident in his life, which will hereafter be noticed, to the narrative of Scripture, could not escape the ecclesiastical writer.

"The restored monarch next set about repairing the damages sustained under the late misrule, and reviving, or rather remodelling, the various departments of government. He framed a concise, but comprehensive, code of laws, so well suited, it was thought, to the exigencies of the times, that it was adopted as their own by the two other members of the triple alliance. It was written in blood, and entitled the author to be called the Draco, rather than the 'Solon of Anahuac,' as he is fondly styled by his admirers. Humanity is one of the best fruits of refinement. It is only with increasing civilization that the legislator studies to economize human suffering, even for the guilty; to devise penalties, not so much by way of punishment for the past as of reformation for the future.

"He divided the burden of government among a number of departments, as the council of war, the council of finance, the council of justice. This last was a court of supreme authority, both in civil and criminal matters, receiving appeals from the lower tribunals of the provinces, which were obliged to make a full report, every four months, or eighty days, of their own proceedings to this higher judicature. In all these bodies a certain number of citizens were allowed to have seats with the nobles and professional dignitaries. There was, however, another body, a council of state, for aiding the king in the despatch of business, and advising him in matters of importance, which was drawn altogether from the highest order of chiefs. It consisted of fourteen members; and they had seats provided for them at the royal table.

"Lastly, there was an extraordinary tribunal, called the council of music, but which, differing from the import of its name, was devoted to the encouragement of science and art. Works on astronomy, chronology, history, or any other science, were required to be submitted to its judgment before they could be made public. This censorial power was of some moment, at least with regard to the historical department, where the wilful perversion of truth was made a capital offence by the bloody code of Nezahualcoyotl. Yet a Tezucan author must have been a bungler who could not elude a conviction under the cloudy veil of hieroglyphics. This body, which was drawn from the best instructed persons in the kingdom, with little regard to rank, had supervision of all the productions of art and of the nicer fabrics. It decided on the qualifications of the professors in the various branches of science, on the fidelity of their instructions to their pupils, the deficiency of which was severely punished, and it instituted examinations of these latter. In short, it was a general board of education for the country. On stated days, historical compositions, and poems treating of moral or traditional topics, were recited before it by their authors. Seats were provided for the three crowned heads of the empire, who deliberated with the other members on the respective merits of the pieces, and distributed prizes of value to the successful competitors.

"Such are the marvellous accounts transmitted to us of this institution; an institution certainly not to have been expected among the aborigines of America. It is calculated to give us a higher idea of the refinement of the people than even the noble architectural remains which still cover some parts of the continent."—Vol. i., pp. 152-155.

The monarch himself, like some other great potentates of the East and West, aspired to be a

poet. The burthen of his song seems to have been that "vanity of vanities," of King Solomon, which is echoed along the course of Eastern, at least of Mahometan poetry, with more or less touching melancholy, and more or less grave epicurean advice to enjoy, while we may, the pleasures of this fleeting and uncertain life. The king of Tezucuo may take his place among royal and noble authors, not merely from traditionary fame, but from a translation of one of his Odes into Castilian. Mr. Prescott has subjoined a translation of the Castilian into English, "by the hand of a fair friend."

"But the hours of the Tezucan monarch were not all passed in idle dalliance with the muse, nor in the sober contemplations of philosophy, as at a later period. In the freshness of youth and early manhood he led the allied armies in their annual expeditions, which were certain to result in a wider extent of territory to the empire. In the intervals of peace he fostered those productive arts which are the surest sources of public prosperity. He encouraged agriculture above all; and there was scarcely a spot so rude, or a steep so inaccessible, as not to confess the power of cultivation. The land was covered with a busy population, and towns and cities sprung up in places since deserted, or dwindled into miserable villages.

"From resources thus enlarged by conquest and domestic industry, the monarch drew the means for the large consumption of his own numerous household, and for the costly works which he executed for the convenience and embellishment of the capital. He filled it with stately edifices for his nobles, whose constant attendance he was anxious to secure at his court. He erected a magnificent pile of buildings which might serve both for a royal residence and for the public offices. It extended, from east to west, 1234 yards; and from north to south, 978. It was encompassed by a wall of unburnt bricks and cement, six feet wide and nine high, for one half of the circumference, and fifteen feet high for the other half. Within this enclosure were two courts. The outer one was used as the great market-place of the city; and continued to be so until long after the Conquest, if, indeed, it is not now. The interior court was surrounded by the council chambers and halls of justice. There were also accommodations there for the foreign ambassadors; and a spacious saloon, with apartments opening into it, for men of science and poets, who pursued their studies in this retreat, or met together to hold converse under its marble porticoes. In this quarter also were kept the public archives, which fared better under the Indian dynasty than they have since under their European successors.

"Adjoining this court were the apartments of the king, including those for the royal harem, as liberally supplied with beauties as that of an eastern sultan. Their walls were encrusted with alabasters and richly tinted stucco, or hung with gorgeous tapestries of variegated feather-work. They led through long arcades, and through intricate labyrinths of shrubbery, into gardens, where baths and sparkling fountains were overshadowed by tall groves of cedar and cypress. The basins of water were well stocked with fish of various kinds, and the aviaries with birds glowing in all the gaudy plumage of the tropics. Many birds and animals, which could not be obtained alive,

were represented in gold and silver so skilfully, as to have furnished the great naturalist, Hernandez, with models for his work.

"Accommodations on a princely scale were provided for the sovereigns of Mexico and Tlacopan, when they visited the court. The whole of this lordly pile contained three hundred apartments, some of them fifty yards square. The height of the building is not mentioned; it was probably not great, but supplied the requisite room by the immense extent of ground which it covered. The interior was doubtless constructed of light materials, especially of the rich woods, which, in that country, are remarkable, when polished, for the brilliancy and variety of their colors. That the more solid materials of stone and stucco were also liberally employed, is proved by the remains at the present day; remains which have furnished an inexhaustible quarry for the churches and other edifices since erected by the Spaniards on the site of the ancient city.

"We are not informed of the time occupied in building this palace; but two hundred thousand workmen, it is said, were employed on it! However this may be, it is certain that the Tezucan monarchs, like those of Asia and ancient Egypt, had the control of immense masses of men, and would sometimes turn the whole population of a conquered city, including the women, into the public works.—The most gigantic monuments of architecture which the world has witnessed would never have been reared by the hands of freemen.

"Adjoining the palace were buildings for the king's children, who, by his various wives, amounted to no less than sixty sons and fifty daughters. Here they were instructed in all the exercises and accomplishments suited to their station; comprehending, what would scarcely find a place in a royal education on the other side of the Atlantic, the arts of working in metals, jewelry, and feather-mosaic. Once in every four months the whole household, not excepting the youngest, and including all the officers and attendants on the king's person, assembled in a grand saloon of the palace, to listen to a discourse from an orator, probably one of the priesthood. The princes, on this occasion, were all dressed in *nequen*, the coarsest manufacture of the country. The preacher began by enlarging on the obligations of morality, and of respect for the gods, especially important in persons whose rank gave such additional weight to example. He occasionally seasoned his homily with a pertinent application to his audience, if any member of it had been guilty of a notorious delinquency. From this wholesome admonition the monarch himself was not exempted, and the orator boldly reminded him of his paramount duty to show respect for his own laws. The king, so far from taking umbrage, received the lesson with humility; and the audience, we are assured, were often melted into tears by the eloquence of the preacher. This curious scene may remind one of similar usages in the Asiatic and Egyptian despotisms, where the sovereign occasionally condescended to stoop from his pride of place, and allow his memory to be refreshed with the conviction of his own mortality. It soothed the feelings of the subject to find himself thus placed, though but for a moment, on a level with his king; while it cost little to the latter, who was removed too far from his people to suffer anything by this short-lived familiarity. It is probable that such an act of public humiliation would have found less favor

with a prince less absolute."—Vol. i., pp. 158, 164.

The villas of this Western Sultan were no less splendid, tasteful, and luxurious, and the history of his domestic life is, for another reason, even more surprising. The harem of these sovereigns, as we have seen, was no less amply peopled than those of the most gorgeous Oriental potentates. But the law of Tezucuo allowed only one lawful wife, to whose children the crown descended by immemorial usage. The king had been disappointed in an early attachment—the princess who had been educated for his wife had been given to another; and the just prince submitted to the decree of the court, which awarded her to his rival. His lawful wife, however, he obtained in a manner so strangely resembling the Old Testament history of David and Uriah, that we should not be satisfied by less than the solemn protest of the historian, that it was related on the authority of the son and grandson of the king. This act is recorded as the great indeble stain upon his character; and national partiality and ancestral reverence would here have struggled against any unconscious bias towards assimilating the life of his great forefather to that example in the Sacred History which he might have heard from his Christian instructors.

But Nezahualcoyotl was likewise the Haroun Alraschid and the Akber of the West. He not only resembled the former in his magnificence, but in his love of disguise, in which he went about discovering the feelings of his subjects in regard to his government, and meeting with adventures which in like manner tried his barbaric justice. Some of the stories are as pithy and diverting as the "Arabian Nights," which we are obliged to remember were not known in Europe till very long after the Tezucan historian had been gathered to his forefathers. The resemblance to the great Mahometan sovereign of India is the superiority of the Acolhuan to the religious creed of his ancestors. There is something, to those familiar with the old Oriental legends of the Talmud or the Koran, singularly and unaccountably similar:—

"He had been married some years to the wife he had so unrighteously obtained, but was not blessed with issue. The priests represented that it was owing to his neglect of the gods of his country; and that his only remedy was to propitiate them by human sacrifice. The king reluctantly consented, and the altars once more smoked with the blood of slaughtered captives. But it was all in vain; and he indignantly exclaimed, 'These idols of wood and stone can neither hear nor feel, much less could they make the heavens and the earth, and man, the lord of it. These must be the work of the all-powerful, unknown God, Creator of the universe, on whom alone I must rely for consolation and support.'

"He then withdrew to his rural palace of Tezcotzincó, where he remained forty days, fasting and praying at stated hours, and offering up no

other sacrifice than the sweet incense of copal, and aromatic herbs and gums. At the expiration of this time, he is said to have been comforted by a vision assuring him of the success of his petition. At all events, such proved to be the fact; and this was followed by the cheering intelligence of the triumph of his arms in a quarter where he had lately experienced some humiliating reverses.

"Greatly strengthened in his former religious convictions, he now openly professed his faith, and was more earnest to wean his subjects from their degrading superstitions, and to substitute nobler and more spiritual conceptions of the Deity. He built a temple in the usual pyramidal form, and on the summit a tower nine stories high, to represent the nine heavens; a tenth was surmounted by a roof painted black, and profusely gilded with stars on the outside, and incrustated with metals and precious stones within. He dedicated this to '*the unknown God, the Cause of causes.*' It seems probable, from the emblem on the tower, as well as from the complexion of his verses, as we shall see, that he mingled with his reverence for the Supreme the astral worship which existed among the Toltecs. Various musical instruments were placed on the top of the tower; and the sound of them, accompanied by the ringing of a sonorous metal struck by a mallet, summoned the worshippers to prayers at regular seasons. No image was allowed in the edifice, as unsuited to the '*invisible God*;' and the people were expressly prohibited from profaning the altars with blood, or any other sacrifices than that of the perfume of flowers and sweet-scented gums."—Vol. i., pp. 173, 175.

If we are to trust the verses which the king composed in the midst of the astronomical studies of his old age—with this higher view of religion—nobler and more consolatory thoughts of the future state of being had dimly dawned upon his mind:—

"All things on earth have their term, and, in the most joyous career of their vanity and splendor, their strength fails, and they sink into the dust. All the round world is but a sepulchre; and there is nothing which lives on its surface that shall not be hidden and entombed beneath it. Rivers, torrents, and streams move onward to their destination. Not one flows back to its pleasant source. They rush onward, hastening to bury themselves in the deep bosom of the ocean. The things of yesterday are no more to-day; and the things of to-day shall cease, perhaps on the morrow. The cemetery is full of the loathsome dust of bodies once quickened by living souls, who occupied thrones, presided over assemblies, marshalled armies, subdued provinces, arrogated to themselves worship, were puffed up with vainglorious pomp, and power, and empire. But these glories have all passed away like the fearful smoke that issues from the throat of Popocatepetl, with no other memorial of their existence than the record on the page of the chronicler.

"The great, the wise, the valiant, the beautiful,—alas! where are they now? They are all mingled with the clod, and that which has befallen them shall happen to us, and to those that come after us. Yet let us take courage, illustrious nobles and chieftains, true friends and loyal subjects,—let us aspire to that heaven where all is eternal, and corruption cannot come. The horrors of the tomb are but the cradle of the Sun, and the

dark shadows of death are brilliant lights for the stars."

"The mystic import of the last sentence seems to point to that superstition respecting the mansions of the Sun, which forms so beautiful a contrast to the dark features of the Aztec mythology."—Vol. i., pp. 175-177.

We must leave the death of the great Tezucan monarch, and the reign of his son, in Mr. Prescott's pages. Mexico was to Tezucan as the sterner and more warlike Rome to the more polite and cultivated Greece. Like Venice, founded by a few wanderers and fugitives on the swampy islands of the great lake, it became a powerful city—the centre of a great nation. The city rose, with rapid progress, to strength and splendor; it connected itself with the land by its strong and solid causeways, bridged over at intervals; and its situation would have been impregnable to less than Spanish valor, European arms, and European vessels. Mexico was an elective monarchy; the choice of the sovereign rested with four of the caciques, who were bound to select one of the brothers, or, in default of brothers, one of the nephews of the late king. The king was a despot; in him was vested the whole legislative and executive power in war and peace; yet there was a powerful nobility of caciques, who held their estates by different tenures, but all might be summoned—perhaps required no summons—to attend the sovereign, with their people, when he went out to war. Their judicial system might excite the astonishment of the Spaniards of that age; it sometimes draws forth a sly expression of envy from their older writers, on whose authority, as well as that of the hieroglyphic paintings, it is described. In each city and its depending territory was a supreme judge, appointed by, and maintained at the expense of, the crown, but entirely independent, holding his office for life, and with no appeal, even to the king, from his tribunal. He took cognizance of all great causes, both civil and criminal. A capital sentence was marked in the hieroglyphical paintings by an arrow drawn across the figure of the criminal. Below the supreme judge there were inferior tribunals for minor causes, down to a kind of police-offices, each of which was to watch over a certain number of families, and report any breach of the laws to the tribunals. Bribery in a judge was punished with death. It was death to usurp the insignia of a judge. The laws were barbarously prodigal of human life. Murder, adultery, some kinds of theft, destruction of the landmarks of property, altering the public measures, unfaithful guardianship of the estate of a ward, even intemperance in young persons, were capital crimes. Barbarism and civilization mingled still more strangely in the law of slavery. Prisoners taken in battle were reserved as sacrifices to the gods; but no one could be born to slavery in Mexico. Criminals, public defaulters, (for the system of taxation was rigorous and well organized,) persons in extreme

poverty, either became slaves by law, or sold themselves into slavery. Parents could thus deal with their children. The services, however, of such slaves were limited; their lives and persons protected; they could not be sold, except in case of extreme poverty, by their masters; their children were born free. The law and the usage seem to have been equally lenient. They were often emancipated, as in Rome, at the death of their master.

The Aztecs of Mexico were a martial race; their leading institutions and the national spirit, the splendor of dress, of ornament, and the pride and glory of Aztec, were centered in war; their legions consisting of 8,000 men, not without discipline. Montezuma had been a distinguished warrior and conqueror. The peculiarity in their mode of fighting was that they did not seek to kill, but to make prisoners, and these prisoners were to be solemn votive offerings to the gods. They did not scalp their enemies, like the North American Indians, and esteem their prowess by the number of scalps they had won: but their valor was tested by the numbers which they furnished for the horrid human hecatombs on their *teocallis*, or temples.

It was the unspeakable barbarity of this part of their religion which so strongly and darkly contrasted with the justice and, in some respects, mild humanity of their civil institutions. All that we know of human sacrifices in the Old World, from "Moloch, horrid king," and the kindred superstitions of older Asia, the self-immolations under the car of Jaganaut, with the other bloody rites of Siva and of Durga in India, the wicker-cages in which our ancestors the Druids consumed their victims; all these terrific scenes shrink into nothing before the amount of human beings regularly slaughtered on the altars of the Mexican gods, with the revolting circumstances which accompanied their sacrifice. These rites seem to have been peculiar to the Aztec races, and among the Mexicans rose to a more dreadful height, and were more inveterately rooted in their habits and feelings. Tradition ascribes to the older Toltecs that milder character which usually belongs to the agricultural races. They offered only purer and bloodless sacrifices to their deities. We have seen that the enlightened sovereign of Tezcuco strove to mitigate, though he could not abolish, this national usage. There can be no doubt that human sacrifices formed a regular part of some of the eastern religions; in the remoter East, as well as in Syria and in Carthage. The instances recorded in later times, in the more polished nations of antiquity, were in general single victims, and offered when the public mind was darkened by the dread, or suffering under the infliction, of some tremendous calamity.* It may be questioned whe-

ther the burning alive of men among the Druids was not judicial rather than religious—execution rather than sacrifice; for the Druids were the judges as well as the priests of the ancient Gauls and Britons. But there is nothing like the refinement (if we may use such a word) of cruelty which, among the nations of Anahuac, made it part of the law of war that the prisoner should be spared on the battle-field, and deliberately and in cold blood offered to the god of war. The priest, as it were, held the hands of the warrior, in order that himself might have the exclusive privilege of slaughter.

Mr. Prescott, with pardonable, and indeed enforced incredulity, makes large deductions from the estimates of victims thus regularly sacrificed on the altars in Mexico. Numbers command but little confidence in older histories, whether poetical or traditional, or, like those of Mexico, chiefly hieroglyphical.* But one fact, he observes, "may be considered certain. It was customary to preserve the skulls of the sacrificed in buildings appropriated to the purpose. The companions of Cortes counted 136,000 in one of these edifices. Without attempting a precise calculation, therefore, it is safe to conclude that thousands were yearly offered up, in the different cities of Anahuac, on the bloody altars of the Mexican divinities." The circumstances of these horrid rites were, if possible, more revolting than the amount of the hecatombs. The flesh runs cold at the account. The more distinguished victims were fattened, as it were, were indulged in every kind of luxury and enjoyment till the day of sacrifice arrived. It was the great national spectacle, the most solemn religious festival. The high pyramidal temples appear to have been constructed for the express purpose of exhibiting the whole minute detail of the torture, and the execution, to the largest number of people. Our abhorrence is increased by the manner in which the priests officiated in the ceremony, groping among the entrails with their bloody hands for the heart of the victim. But in the darkest depth there is even a darker depth. Some paradoxical writers have attempted to dispute the proofs of cannibalism; which, if less common than is supposed, appears to us to rest on incontestable evidence in so many quarters of the world. The most amiable skepticism can, we fear, encourage no doubt that in Mexico both priests

and both the *Iphigenias* of Euripides, in one of which the victor is saved by the intervention of the deity, in the other it is the altar of the barbarous Scythian Diana where such offerings are made, show the predominant feeling on this subject in Greece and Rome. Two notes in Milman's "History of Christianity," vol. i., p. 27, mention the recorded exceptions of later times.

* There is something very honest in old Bernal Diaz, who accuses Gomara of enormously exaggerating the numbers slain in the different battles under Cortes himself. "Our force seldom much exceeded four hundred men; and even if we had found the multitude he speaks of bound hand and foot, we had not been able to put so many to death."

* The Roman prohibitory law against human sacrifices, quoted by Mr. Prescott from Pliny, is manifestly directed against foreign and Oriental magical rites. Livy's words relating to such rites, "more non Romano,"

and people feasted on the flesh of the victims, which was cast down among them. It seems to have been a part of the sacrifice; just like the feasting on the slaughtered bulls and goats of other religious sacrifices. Alas for human nature, that such things should be in a land where Providence was so lavish of all its bounties; where man was so far advanced beyond the savage—had learned to improve the blessings of God by the arts of civilization, and in so many respects had submitted himself to the softening influence of regular social order, of just and humane institutions, even of many of the domestic virtues.*

Had the Spaniards appeared in the cities of Mexico solely as the champions of humanity—as commissioned by the common Father of mankind forcibly to put down these unspeakable abominations—not as asserting the sovereignty of a foreign emperor, who had no more right to the supremacy over Mexico than over France or England, on the preposterous claim of a papal grant; had they raised the banner of the cross only to save the thousand victims of this ferocious superstition from their unmerited fate—not to compel, by fire and sword, the adoption, we must not say the belief, of that religion emphatically termed the religion of mercy,—in this case, though the strict justice of such interposition might have been questionable, the stronger sympathies of men would have hailed their triumph. Though their own hands might not be clean, though their own *autos da fé* might rise up against them, as in one respect more appalling—as more utterly alien to the spirit of their religion—yet no one would have disputed the merit of ridding the earth, and that with such surprising valor, of such a monstrous superstition.

Let us look, however, at the question in another light. Consider the ferocity which a people must have imbibed from these bloody spectacles, and the evidence which is furnished of the warlike character of a nation which could thus feed its altars with thousands of prisoners, from tribes as strong, if not as well armed, as themselves, and our astonishment at the conquest achieved by this handful of Spaniards is immeasurably increased. Consider the dread in which the Aztecs must on this account, as well as on others, have been held by the surrounding nations. It is even more extraordinary, notwithstanding the wide-spread discontent at their tyranny, and the proneness to rebellion or to war of the neighboring tribes, that Cortes should find or make allies who should adhere to him in

* Let the reader turn to the advice of an Aztec mother to her daughter—(the first article in Mr. Prescott's Appendix)—and though that deepest well-spring of tenderness, a mother's heart, is never dry, even in the lowest condition of humanity, and the "advice inculcates conjugal fidelity, not merely because God, who is in every place, sees you, but because the law punished adultery with death;" yet it seems almost incredible that such pure and gentle, though simply expressed, sentiments could prevail among a people whose altars, whose lips, reeked with human blood.

disaster as well as success—in defeat as well as in victory. It was this mighty empire, or rather confederation of empires, which Cortes, with a few hundred Spaniards, did not hesitate to invade, and hoped to subdue. It was not long, indeed, before he discovered the dissensions which existed in the country; that, besides the valor, and arms, and horses of his own few soldiers, he might array some of the most powerful tribes against the empire of Montezuma; and the revolted subjects of Mexico, weary of their emperor's tyrannical sway, would be his best allies. In the first city which he conquered, (Cempoalla,) the inhabitants of the town and of the neighboring province, who, according to his statement, could bring fifty thousand men into the field, willingly, as Cortes writes to Charles V., became the vassals of his Majesty.

"They also begged me to protect them against that mighty lord (Montezuma) who used violent and tyrannical measures to keep them in subjection, and took from them their sons to be slain, and offered as sacrifices to his idols, with many other complaints against him, in order to avoid whose tyranny they embraced the service of your Majesty, to which they have so far proved faithful, and I doubt not will continue so, since they have been uniformly treated by me with favor and attention."—*Despatches of Cortes*, p. 40.

In another passage he says,—

"I was not a little pleased on seeing their want of harmony, as it seemed favorable to my designs, and would enable me to bring them more easily into subjection. I applied to their case the authority of the evangelist, who says, 'Every kingdom divided against itself shall be rendered desolate.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 64.

Cortes very early in his career received intelligence of the hostility of the powerful republic of Tlascala to the empire of Mexico, and entertained hopes of turning this to his own advantage: but, though at the same time with the arduous and appalling nature of their enterprise, these more reasonable means of accomplishing it opened upon the minds of the invaders—they had a ready plunged headlong into the adventure, and the resolute heart of Cortes seemed wound up to accomplish it, or to perish in the attempt. In his first despatch to the emperor (the lost despatch, but to which he appeals in the second,) he "had assured his Highness that he (Montezuma) should be taken either dead or alive, or become a subject to the royal throne of your Majesty." (p. 39.) It was a warfare in which they engaged without counting the cost or the hazard, because it was a warfare of conquest and of glory for Spain; still more because it was a holy warfare—a warfare against infidels. It was not that they knowingly alleged the pretext of religious zeal to cover the nobler passion of ambition, or the baser one of avarice. There can be no doubt that this of itself was a great, if not the great, dominant impulse. The thirst for gold and for power were so inseparably mixed up with this lofty and disinterested bigotry

that they themselves never paused to discriminate between the prevailing motives; nor could they have discriminated, if they had ever so scrupulously examined their own hearts.

It was, as Mr. Prescott calls it, a crusade; it was one of the last, but not least, vigorous outbursts of that same spirit which had poured Europe in arms upon the East; and in the Peninsula had just fought out the long and implacable contest of Christian and Moor. Some more enlightened churchmen, like Las Casas, some more gentlemanly and more prudent friars (like Father Olmedo, who was of the utmost use in restraining the blind and headstrong bigotry of Cortes,) might have gleams of a more genuine Christianity; but in Spanish armies, in Europe as well as in America, hardly one, from the Duke of Alva to the meanest common soldier, but believed it, in the depth of his heart, to be his solemn duty to compel the baptism of unbelievers at the point of the sword. The velvet banner which Cortes raised before his door at Cuba, to invite adventurers to join him in his enterprise, bore the royal arms, with a cross, and the motto—"Brothers, follow the cross in faith; for under its guidance we shall conquer." "And besides, (Cortes, as he himself writes, reminded his soldiers,) we are only doing what as Christians we are under obligations to do, by warring against the enemies of the faith—by which means we secured to ourselves glory in another world, and gained greater honor and rewards, in this life, than had fallen to the lot of any other generation at any former period; they should also reflect that God was on our side, and that to him nothing is impossible, as they might see in the victories we had gained, when so many of the enemy were killed without any loss on our part." On their first serious affair with the Indians an apostle was believed at the time (or afterwards fabled) to have appeared, and fought on their side. And on other occasions of peril and disaster, the same faith beheld the same supernatural appearances. Even Diaz himself ceases to doubt in the celestial presence of St. Jago.* Throughout, the Mexicans are the "enemies of God and our King."

*The passage of Bernal Diaz relating to the first apparition, which we take from the English translation, is worth notice, as to that story itself, and still more so with reference to his subsequent convictions. "Gomara relates that in this battle, previous to the arrival of Cortes with his cavalry, one of the Holy Apostles, either St. Jago or Peter, appeared on a dapple-grey horse, under the semblance of Francesco de Morla. All our victories were assuredly guided by the hand of our Lord Jesus Christ; but if this were the case, I, a poor sinner, was not worthy to be permitted to see it, neither was it seen by any of our army, above four hundred in number. I certainly saw Francesco de Morla along with Cortes; but he rode a chestnut horse that day. We certainly were had Christians indeed, if, according to the account of Gomara, God sent one of his Holy Apostles to fight at our head, and we ungratefully neglected to give thanks for so great a mercy; but, till I read the chronicle of Gomara, I never heard of the miracle, neither was it ever mentioned by any of the conquerors who were present in the battle."

We shall not undertake to follow Mr. Prescott through the early life of Cortes—the difficulties of the expedition before it quitted the coasts of Cuba—or the miserable weakness and jealousies of the governor, Velasquez—who, after entrusting the charge of the expedition to Cortes, and allowing him to spend his whole fortune, and all that he could raise from other quarters, on the outfit of the fleet—suddenly endeavored to revoke his commission, to arrest the fleet, and either to abandon or to place the enterprise in other hands. It is sometimes of great advantage to be ill-used: even now, as in his own day, the vacillating conduct of Velasquez, the low intrigues at his petty court, kindle all the generous sympathies in favor of Cortes; we follow him with breathless interest till he is beyond these wretched obstructions. But we are still more inclined to admiration at the extraordinary skill with which he triumphs over what might seem fatal to his success, the divided allegiance of his soldiery. He had to deal with troops, half of them, especially the leaders, malcontents—and malcontents who certainly could plead a higher authority for their mutinous behavior. We are inclined to feel more regret than is expressed by Mr. Prescott at the loss of the first despatch of Cortes, which has been sought in vain in all the archives of Europe. Some, we think very unreasonably, doubt if it was ever written; and that Cortes alludes to this imaginary document, which it would have been difficult to have framed in accordance with Spanish notions of subordination, especially those which prevailed with the counsellors of the emperor on Indian affairs. This despatch would have added, perhaps, little to our knowledge of the facts, or of the conduct of Cortes; and his own version of the quarrel with Velasquez, and his own assertion of independence, may be fully collected from other quarters—yet we should have liked to read the exact statement, as he had dressed it up for the imperial ear: still more his own first fresh impressions when he found himself, not merely in a new land, and with a meek or a hostile savage population, but on the verge of a great empire, gradually expanding before him. The expeditions of Cordova, and, still more, that of Grijalva, who had reached the coast of Mexico, had spread the knowledge of a people who lived in houses of stone and lime, cultivated maize, and possessed gold. Grijalva had seen some of their temples, with their wild priesthood, and their altars wet with human blood; and some vague rumors had transpired of powerful and wealthy races. But it was not till Cortes could avail himself of the services of Marina, that he had the least notion of the extent and power of the Mexican empire. The singular history of the beautiful and faithful interpreter, the mistress and preserver of Cortes, her unshaken attachment to the Spaniards, and wonderful escape in all their perils and disasters, is not the least truly romantic incident in the romance of their history.

On the other hand, the picture writing of the Mexicans transmitted immediately to the court the description of these awful and wonderful strangers who had suddenly appeared upon their shores. Mr. Prescott thus describes this incident, which shows the promptitude with which Cortes seized at once upon every thing which, by impressing the Mexican mind with awe of their mysterious powers, might tend to advance his designs of conquest:—

“While these things were passing, Cortes observed one of Teuhtile's attendants busy with a pencil, apparently delineating some object. On looking at his work, he found that it was a sketch on canvass of the Spaniards, their costumes, arms, and, in short, different objects of interest, giving to each its appropriate form and color. This was the celebrated picture-writing of the Aztecs, and, as Teuhtile informed him, this man was employed in portraying the various objects for the eye of Montezuma, who would thus gather a more vivid notion of their appearance than from any description by words. Cortes was pleased with the idea; and, as he knew how much the effect would be heightened by converting still life into action, he ordered out the cavalry on the beach, the wet sands of which afforded a firm footing for the horses. The bold and rapid movements of the troops, as they went through their military exercises; the apparent ease with which they managed the fiery animals on which they were mounted; the glancing of their weapons, and the shrill cry of the trumpet, all filled the spectators with astonishment; but when they heard the thunders of the cannon, which Cortes ordered to be fired at the same time, and witnessed the volumes of smoke and flame issuing from these terrible engines, and the rushing sound of the balls, as they dashed through the trees of the neighboring forest, shivering their branches into fragments, they were filled with consternation, from which the Aztec chief himself was not wholly free.

“Nothing of all this was lost on the painters, who faithfully recorded, after their fashion, every particular; not omitting the ships—the water-houses, as they called them—of the strangers, which, with their dark hulls and snow-white sails reflected from the water, were swinging lazily at anchor on the calm bosom of the bay. All was depicted with a fidelity that excited in their turn the admiration of the Spaniards, who, doubtless unprepared for this exhibition of skill, greatly over-estimated the merits of the execution.”—Vol. i., pp. 274, 275.

It is remarkable how the circumstances of the time conspired to favor the Spanish invaders. Montezuma himself, from an intrepid warrior and a successful conqueror, had sunk into a secluded and indolent Oriental despot—instead of commanding the confidence and devoted attachment of his subjects, the glory which his youthful conquests had obtained for the Mexican name, and the advantages which had ensued from the more peaceful years of his reign, were now almost forgotten in his oppressive tyranny. Half-conquered provinces, groaning under heavy taxation, had yet the remembrance of their former freedom, and were ready to cast off the yoke. It is still more remark-

able that the superstition to which Montezuma had surrendered himself as the devoutest votary, which had led him to crowd the altars with human sacrifices in unprecedented numbers, and to ally himself by the strongest ties with the bloody priesthood, now, as it were, turned against him, and prostrated his spirit before the imagined divinity, or at least the predicted success of the stranger. The desperate energy with which the religion, even more than the national spirit, maddened, it is true, by the cruelty or outrages of the Spaniards, rallied under his successor Guatemozin; the actual part which the priesthood took in the last struggle, which was so nearly fatal to the Spaniards; the manner in which the Spaniards themselves were appalled by seeing their brethren in the agony of sacrifice; and the mad hope and ungovernable frenzy of the Mexicans at that manifest triumph of their gods; all combine to show how fortunate it was that the religious feeling of Montezuma was cowed and subdued, and this most powerful weapon of resistance fell, as it were, from his hand. This alone accounts for the strange manner in which the mind of Montezuma was paralyzed at the first news of the landing of the Spaniards. The paintings of the white-bearded men in flying castles, who spoke in thunder and lightning, shook him with awe, from which he never recovered. All authorities agree about the currency of these prophecies, which no one in the empire believed with more shuddering faith than the emperor. Dryden puts them in the mouth of the high priest in his “Indian Emperor.” From the intolerable love-rants which fill that strange play, in which Spaniards and Mexicans, Cortes and Montezuma, cross each other in all the wild intricacy of amorous intrigue (as in a comedy “de Capa y Espada,”) we are inclined to rescue the few lines, more worthy of glorious John.

“Enter Guyomar hastily: the scene is a Sacrifice in the Temple.”

Odmar.—My brother Guyomar! methinks I spy,
Haste in his steps, and wonder in his eye.

Montezuma.—I sent thee to the frontiers; quickly tell

The cause of thy return; are all things well?

Guyomar.—I went in order, sir, to your command,
To view the utmost limits of the land,
To that sea-shore where no more world is found,

But foaming billows breaking on the ground,
Where, for a while, my eyes no object met,
But distant skies, that in the ocean set;

And low-hung clouds that dipp'd themselves
in rain

To shake their fleeces on the earth again.

At last, as far as I could cast my eyes

Upon the sea, somewhat methought did rise

Like bluish mists, which, still appearing more,

Took dreadful shapes, and moved towards the shore.

Montezuma.—What forms did these new wonders represent?

Guyomar.—More strange than what your wonder can invent.

The object I could first distinctly view
Was tall, straight trees, which on the waters
flew :

Wings on their sides, instead of leaves, did
grow,

Which gathered all the breath the winds could
blow ;

And at their roots grew floating palaces,
Whose outbowed bellies cut the yielding seas.

Montezuma.—What divine monsters, O ye Gods,
are these,

That float in air, and fly upon the seas !
Came they alive or dead upon the shore ?

Guyomar.—Alas ! they lived, too sure ; I heard
them roar :

All turned their sides, and to each other
spoke—

I saw their words breathe out in fire and
smoke :

Sure 'tis their voice, that thunders from on
high,

Or these the younger brothers of the sky ;
Deaf with the noise, I took my hasty flight—

No mortal courage can support the fright.

High Priest.—Old prophecies foretell our fall at
hand

When bearded men in floating castles land ;
I see it is of dire portent."

Indian Emperor, Act i., Scene 2.

Mr. Prescott has collected these prodigies, as they rest on the Mexican authorities, either from chronicles of the time, or from those historians who wrote soon after the conquest. His explanation is sensible, and no doubt true :—

"In a preceding chapter I have noticed the popular traditions respecting Quetzalcoatl, that deity with a fair complexion and flowing beard, so unlike the Indian physiognomy, who, after fulfilling his mission of benevolence among the Aztecs, embarked on the Atlantic Sea for the mysterious shores of Tlapallan. He promised, on his departure, to return at some future day with his posterity, and resume the possession of his empire. That day was looked forward to with hope or with apprehension, according to the interest of the believer, but with general confidence throughout the wide borders of the Anahuac. Even after the conquest, it still lingered among the Indian races, by whom it was as fondly cherished, as the advent of their king Sebastian continued to be by the Portuguese, or that of the Messiah by the Jews.

"A general feeling seems to have prevailed, in the time of Montezuma, that the period for the return of the deity, and the full accomplishment of his promise, was near at hand. This conviction is said to have gained ground from various preternatural occurrences, reported with more or less detail by all the most ancient historians. In 1510, the great lake of Tezcucó, without the occurrence of a tempest, or earthquake, or any other visible cause, became violently agitated, overflowed its banks, and, pouring into the streets of Mexico, swept off many of the buildings by the fury of the waters. In 1511, one of the turrets of the great temple took fire, equally without any apparent cause, and continued to burn in defiance of all attempts to extinguish it. In the following years three comets were seen ; and not long before the coming of the Spaniards a strange light broke forth in the east. It spread broad at its base on

the horizon, and, rising in a pyramidal form, tapered off as it approached the zenith. It resembled a vast sheet or flood of fire, emitting sparkles, or, as an old writer expresses it, 'seemed thickly powdered with stars.' At the same time, low voices were heard in the air, and doleful wailings, as if to announce some strange, mysterious calamity ! The Aztec monarch, terrified at the apparitions in the heavens, took council of Nezahualpili, who was a great proficient in the subtle science of astrology. But the royal sage cast a deeper cloud over his spirit, by reading in these prodigies the speedy downfall of the empire.

"Such are the strange stories reported by the chroniclers in which it is not impossible to detect the glimmerings of truth. Nearly thirty years had elapsed since the discovery of the islands by Columbus, and more than twenty since his visit to the American continent. Rumors, more or less distinct, of this wonderful appearance of the white men, bearing in their hands the thunder and the lightning, so like in many respects to the traditions of Quetzalcoatl, would naturally spread far and wide among the Indian nations. Such rumors, doubtless, long before the landing of the Spaniards in Mexico, found their way up the grand plateau, filling the minds of men with anticipations of the near coming of the period when the great deity was to return and receive his own again."—Vol. I., pp. 283-285.

What wonder, then, that when Montezuma found himself face to face with the invincible, inevitable stranger, he stood rebuked and awe-struck before him ? All his embassies, all his prohibitions to advance, all his intrigues, all his conspiracies, all the courageous resistance of the republicans of Tlascala, had been in vain. From the first moment in which Cortes announced his intention of visiting Mexico, he had been constantly, though slowly, approaching nearer and nearer. Montezuma may have known, probably did know, nothing of the greatest difficulties which embarrassed the movements of Cortes—of the dissensions in his own camp, the struggles of the partisans of Velasquez, joined with the fears of the more timid—of the address with which he had persuaded his troops to invest him with a kind of legal sovereignty in the new colony, holding his power direct from the crown of Spain, and independent of the governor of Cuba. He might receive vague rumors of the destruction of the ships at Vera Cruz. That daring and decisive measure, which plainly announced to the Spaniards that they had no alternative but conquest or death in a foreign land, would not carry its distinct import to the mind of the Mexican ; their motives would be obscure, and he could have no notion of the difficulties of building ships for a long sea-voyage. But this he would know, and know too certainly—that the Spaniards were moving on, and still moving on, and that obstacles fell, as by enchantment, before them. They had first reached the great city of Cempoalla, and had been received with the utmost hospitality ; they had awed or won the whole tribe to join them as allies—there, too, they had impiously, yet with impu-

nity, denied the gods of the land, hurled the idols boldly from their pedestals, cleansed the temples from the blood which had so long flowed in honor of the deities, and set up images of their own to receive divine worship. And the gods had allowed these insults, this total abolition of their rites, to pass unresisted and unavenged! The strangers had gone fearlessly forward, ascended the strong and rugged passes of the Cordilleras, had reached the great level land, the seat of the Mexican and Tezucan empires. The Tlascalans, the most obstinate and formidable enemies of the Mexican empire, under a most skilful leader, and with the most determined valor, had in vain attempted to arrest their march. They had been ridden over by the gigantic animals which bore the iron men to battle; had been mowed down by thousands with their thunders and lightnings; and had at length been compelled to submission. The conqueror had entered Tlascala, and, by the more than human power which he seemed to exercise over the minds of men, he had changed these deadly enemies into faithful allies—all Tlascala was following the stranger in arms, to assist in the conquest of Mexico! But, more astonishing still, the dark and deep-laid conspiracy to cut them off in Cholula, devised with so much craft, and conducted with so much secrecy—had been detected by these strangers, who knew nothing of their language, who communicated with them, and but imperfectly, through one of their countrymen and one female native interpreter—detected at the moment that it was ripe—by what means, unless by the gift of reading the heart of man, or by some divine communication, they could not conjecture. The terrible and remorseless vengeance had burst upon them at the moment when they expected themselves to crush their unheeding adversaries. Cholula had paid the dreadful penalty of the meditated crime by a massacre which might appal the stoutest heart. "So far," in Mr. Prescott's words, "the prowess of the Spaniards, 'the white gods,' as they were often called, made them to be thought invincible. But it was not till their arrival at Cholula that the natives learned how terrible was their vengeance—and they trembled!" (Vol. II., p. 33.) From this time, as far as Montezuma was concerned, the conduct of the Mexicans towards the Spaniards was deprecatory and submissive, as towards beings of another nature; their presents were like lavish offerings to deities whose power they wished to propitiate, or at least to avert their anger. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of his bolder councillors, the emperor had abandoned all thoughts of resistance, and seemed prepared to await his destiny with a kind of fearful curiosity.

The sagacious mind of Cortes had no doubt, some notion of the preternatural character in which the Spaniards appeared to the Indians. He took every opportunity of impressing those terrors more deeply on the minds of the people.

His soldiers, probably himself, were not without their apprehensions; and the expanding view of the magnificence, power, wealth, populousness of the cities which one after another rose upon their view, could not but contrast with their own narrow files and small company of fifteen horse, and less than four hundred men—accompanied indeed by numerous allies—but allies on whose fidelity it might well seem presumption to reckon implicitly. Honest Bernal Diaz is too brave not to own his fears:—"We continued our march. As our allies had informed us that Montezuma intended to put us all to death after our entry into his city, we were filled with melancholy reflections on our hazardous situation; recommending our souls, therefore, to the Lord Jesus Christ, who had brought us in safety through so many imminent dangers, and resolving to sell our lives at a dear rate, we proceeded on our march." We cannot find room for Mr. Prescott's picturesque description of the first opening of the great valley upon the astonished sight of the Spaniards; nor of the grandeur and extent of the city. But there are two more touches in Bernal Diaz, so simple, yet which convey so much in a few words, that we must allow them to stand in place of our author's longer description:—"When," says the adventurer, "I beheld the delicious scenery around me, I thought we had been transported by magic to the terrestrial paradise." As he surveyed the city from the height of one of the *teocallis* or temples, he says:—"The noise and bustle of the market in the great square just below was so great, that it might easily have been heard almost at the distance of a league; and some of our companions, who had seen both Rome and Constantinople, declared that they had not seen any thing comparable in those cities for convenient and regular distribution, or numbers of people."

We proceed at once to the peaceful entrance of the Spaniards into the city, and the first interview of Cortes with Montezuma. Our contempt for the pusillanimity of Montezuma, from the first moment of this meeting with Cortes, melts into respect for the dignified courtesy of his demeanor and language; the weak and superstitious barbarian becomes a noble gentleman, bowed by the weight of inevitable calamity, and enduring affliction after affliction, insult after insult, with deep but suppressed feeling, with an outward lofty patience, yet with an inward agony of wounded pride which strives not to betray itself. It is, in the favorite phrase of our neighbors, an august misfortune. With tranquil dignity he puts by the summary and, no doubt, utterly unintelligible proposal of Cortes at their first conference, that he should change his religion; and assumes the affable tone and language of a royal host. Mr. Prescott tells it well:—

"He listened, however, with silent attention, until the general had concluded his homily. He then replied, that he knew the Spaniards had held

this discourse wherever they had been. He doubted not their God was, as they said, a good Being. His gods, also, were good to him. Yet what his visitor said of the creation of the world was like what he had been taught to believe. It was not worth while to discourse further of the matter. His ancestors, he said, were not the original proprietors of the land. They had occupied it but a few ages, and had been led there by a great Being, who, after giving them laws and ruling over the nation for a time, had withdrawn to the regions where the sun rises. He had declared, on his departure, that he or his descendants would again visit them and resume his empire. The wonderful deeds of the Spaniards, their fair complexions, and the quarter whence they came, all showed they were his descendants. If Montezuma had resisted their visit to his capital, it was because he had heard such accounts of their cruelties—that they sent the lightning to consume his people, or crushed them to pieces under the hard feet of the ferocious animals on which they rode. He was now convinced that these were idle tales; that the Spaniards were kind and generous in their natures; they were mortals of a different race, indeed, from the Aztecs, wiser, and more valiant—and for this he honored them.

“‘You, too,’ he added, with a smile, ‘have been told, perhaps, that I am a god, and dwell in palaces of gold and silver. But you see it is false. My houses, though large, are of stone and wood like those of others; and as to my body,’ he said, baring his tawny arm, ‘you see it is flesh and bone like yours. It is true I have a great empire, inherited from my ancestors; lands, and gold, and silver. But your sovereign beyond the waters is, I know, the rightful lord of all. I rule in his name. You, Malintzin, are his ambassador; you and your brethren shall share these things with me. Rest now from your labors. You are here in your own dwellings, and every thing shall be provided for your subsistence. I will see that your wishes shall be obeyed in the same way as my own.’ As the monarch concluded these words, a few natural tears suffused his eyes, while the image of ancient independence perhaps, flitted across his mind. *****

“The iron hearts of the Spaniards were touched with the emotion displayed by Montezuma, as well as by his princely spirit of liberality. As they passed him, the cavaliers, with bonnet in hand, made him the most profound obeisance, and ‘on the way home,’ continues the same chronicler, ‘we could discourse of nothing but the gentle breeding and courtesy of the Indian monarch, and of the respect we entertained for him.’”—Vol. ii., pp. 82-84.

Yet, in all the astonishment which Cortes felt, at seeing that mighty emperor thus, as it were, offering allegiance to his master, and heaping the most costly presents on the soldiery with imperial munificence, he never for an instant forgets any precaution which may tend to security in his hazardous position, nor any measure which may deepen the awe of his power. That very night Mexico is startled with the terrific thunder of these new gods. The whole artillery is fired, as if for a salute of rejoicing, that while its booming sounds were heard, and its sulphurous exhalations clouded over the city, Mexico might cease to wonder at

the submission of her emperor to beings who thus wielded the arms of Heaven. Natural curiosity might lead Cortes almost immediately to demand permission to survey the magnificence, the extent, and the wealth of the city; and even to enter the temples, to ascertain the real character of the gods they worshipped, and the religious ceremonies they practised. The effect, if not the object, of the former, would be to stimulate the insatiable avarice of his followers, to increase their hopes of plunder to such a height as to make them shrink from no danger, hesitate at no aggression; in the latter, the unspeakable horrors of the bloody altars, the remains of human sacrifices, the cannibal priests, might steel their hearts, and even his own, to the remorseless fulfilment of his designs. Men of less fanatic faith might have imagined themselves summoned by a divine impulse, moved as Cortes declares himself on one, and that a far less justifiable, occasion, by the Holy Ghost, to risk all to rid the world of such enormities. On this subject we will only say further, that it was here that the Spanish soldiers counted the 136,000 skulls of human victims, laid up as memorials of the devotion of the Mexican people.

We turn to the darkening tragedy of Montezuma. His courteous reception of the Spaniards, his submissive acknowledgment of the superiority of the Emperor Charles, above all the liberality of his gifts, embarrassed Cortes more than open hostility; it had whetted the appetites of the soldiery for gold; it had encouraged the resolution of Cortes to effect a complete conquest of the country, yet seemed to have cut off all justification for further aggression. Yet Cortes had only been six days in the city when he determined on the seizure of the emperor in his own palace. Ambition can always find pretexts; and an event which had happened when Cortes was at Cholula had been, perhaps, treasured in his recollection for such an occasion. Two Spaniards had been murdered on their way from Vera Cruz, where Cortes had left 150 men to guard his infant settlement, to Almeria, the cacique of which city had tendered his allegiance. In a battle which followed to revenge the death of these Spaniards, the Indians had been totally defeated, but the captain, Escalante, and several other Spaniards slain. It was convenient to charge this on the secret hostility of Montezuma: no doubt, therefore, could be allowed to exist of his guilt; yet Cortes, as if he was secure against any high moral indignation on the part of his master, in his despatch to Charles V., fairly owns that he had fully resolved on the seizure of Montezuma, before he called to mind this event. There is a frankness in his avowal, that he thought all means lawful to advance what he considered his sovereign's interest, so characteristic of the times and of the man, as to make his own words worthy of quotation:—

“Judging from these things, and from what I had observed of the country, that it would subserve

the interests of your Majesty and our own security, if Montezuma was in my power, and not wholly free from restraint; in order that he might not be diverted from the resolution and willing spirit which he showed in the service of your Majesty, especially as we Spaniards were somewhat troublesome and difficult to please; lest feeling annoyed on any occasion, he should do us some serious injury, and even might cause all memory of us to perish, in the exercise of his great power. It also appeared to me, that if he was under my control, all the other countries that were subject to him would be more easily brought to the knowledge and service of your Majesty, as afterwards actually happened. I resolved, therefore, to take him and place him in my quarters, which were of great strength."

The manner in which he fulfilled this virtuous resolution, he relates with the same quiet coolness:—

"Having used the precaution to station guards at the corner of the streets, I went to the palace of Montezuma, as I had before often done, to visit him; and after conversing with him in a sportive manner on agreeable topics, and receiving at his hands some jewels of gold, and one of his own daughters, together with several daughters of his nobles for some of my company, I then said unto him"—(*Despatches of Cortes*, p. 92.)

The speech, uttered no doubt in stately Spanish by Cortes, and rendered into elegant Mexican by Marina, amounted in plain English to this—

"that he was a prisoner—that he was accused of being an accomplice in the hostilities of the cacique of Almeria—that Cortes could not believe him guilty of such unfriendly treachery, but nevertheless he must march away to the Spanish quarters."

"Montezuma listened to this proposal, and the flimsy reasoning with which it was covered, with looks of profound amazement. He became pale as death; but in a moment, his face flushed with resentment, as, with the pride of offended dignity, he exclaimed, 'When was it ever heard that a great prince, like myself, voluntarily left his own palace to become a prisoner in the hands of strangers!'

"Cortes assured him he would not go as a prisoner. He would experience nothing but respectful treatment from the Spaniards; would be surrounded by his own household, and hold intercourse with his people as usual. In short, it would be but a change of residence, from one of his palaces to another, a circumstance of frequent occurrence with him.—It was in vain. 'If I should consent to such a degradation,' he answered, 'my subjects never would!' When further pressed, he offered to give up one of his sons and of his daughters, to remain as hostages with the Spaniards, so that he might be spared this disgrace.

"Two hours passed in this fruitless discussion, till a high-mettled cavalier, Velasquez de Leon, impatient of the long delay, and seeing that the attempt, if not the deed, must ruin them, cried out, 'Why do we waste words on this barbarian! We have gone too far to recede now. Let us seize him, and, if he resists, plunge our swords into his body!' The fierce tone and menacing gestures with which this was uttered, alarmed the monarch, who inquired of Marina what the angry Spaniard said. The interpreter explained it in as gentle a manner as she could, beseeching him 'to accompany the white men to their quarters, where he would be treated with all respect and kindness,

while to refuse them would but expose himself to violence, perhaps to death.' Marina, doubtless, spoke to her sovereign as she thought, and no one had better opportunity of knowing the truth than herself.

"This last appeal shook the resolution of Montezuma. It was in vain that the unhappy prince looked around for sympathy or support. As his eyes wandered over the stern visages and iron forms of the Spaniards, he felt that his hour was indeed come; and, with a voice scarcely audible from emotion, he consented to accompany the strangers,—to quit the palace, whither he was never more to return. Had he possessed the spirit of the first Montezuma, he would have called his guards around him, and left his life-blood on the threshold, sooner than have been dragged a dishonored captive across it. But his courage sank under the circumstances. He felt he was the instrument of an irresistible Fate!"—Vol. ii., pp. 153–155.

But what was this degradation to that which followed in a few days! At first he was treated with the utmost courtesy. He had full enjoyment of all the luxuries, the splendor of his state. He could command the presence of his wives and of his courtiers. He gave public audience, though every avenue was strongly guarded by the Spanish soldiery. Even the Spaniards treated him with the mockery of respect. But when the cacique arrived who had been engaged in the battle with the Spaniards, the emperor was compelled to ratify the sentence of death upon his own subjects, who, when the sentence was passed, pleaded his imperial orders. He was compelled to witness their execution with fetters on his own limbs. The criminals were burned alive—a kind of execution apparently unknown in Mexico. To us it may awaken revolting reminiscences of scenes enough in Europe, from which Cortes and his soldiers may have learned the terrible impressiveness of this kind of death. Cortes, ever mingling policy with his most atrocious acts, ordered the pyres to be constructed of the arrows, javelins, and other weapons from the arsenals around the great temple; thus craftily depriving the people of the arms which they might seize at any time, and turn against their oppressors.

"Montezuma was speechless under the infliction of this last insult. He was like one struck down by a heavy blow; that deprives him of all his faculties. He offered no resistance; but, though he spoke not a word, low, ill-suppressed moans, from time to time, intimated the anguish of his spirit. His attendants, bathed in tears, offered him their consolations. They tenderly held his feet in their arms, and endeavored, by inserting their shawls and mantles, to relieve them from the pressure of the iron. But they could not reach the iron which had penetrated into his soul. He felt that he was no more a king."—Vol. ii., p. 159.

This aggravation of insult might appear doubtful policy, but its success seemed to justify its wisdom, and of its cruelty no one took account. Cortes with his own hand, and with a solemn mockery of reverence, loosened the fetters, and then offered Montezuma his freedom; but he had

read the heart of the humbled monarch, who, from fear or from shame, could no longer face his indignant subjects: the emperor remained a willing prisoner. He even seems to have subdued his mind to his fortunes. He won the hearts of the Spaniards by his dignified familiarity. He seemed to revive to the power of enjoyment. Under Spanish custody he practised his devotions in the temple; under Spanish custody he indulged in the pleasures of the chase. With consummate address, Cortes persuaded him that it was for his amusement that some brigantines were built, to exhibit to the wondering Mexicans the manner in which the Spaniards commanded the winds of heaven to impel their large vessels as they pleased. Cortes, meantime, was thus securing the mastery of the lake, either as a means of defence or of retreat.

Before long, Cortes ventured to suggest to the obsequious emperor the formal recognition of his master's supremacy. The caciques were summoned to a great public assembly. Montezuma, not without tears, took his own oath of fealty to the sovereign of the white men; and not without tears did his subjects assent to their abasement, and prove their loyal attachment by humbly following the example of their monarch. Even the hard Spaniards were moved at this touching scene. As a tangible acknowledgment of their fealty, the treasures of the land were brought in from all quarters as a tribute to the white man. Had Montezuma known the difficulties of Cortes in dividing this spoil, and the severe trial to which it subjected his authority over his army, the tribute would have appeared a politic measure; yet, thus steeped in degradation to the lips, Montezuma, as if spell-bound, retained his fidelity. He consented to degrade the sovereign of Tezcuco, (Cacumatzin,) who was hostile to the Spaniards, and to invest his brother, who was more flexible to Spanish influence, with the royal dignity.

When Cortes demanded possession of one of the temples, cleansed it from all its defilements, and insulted the religious feelings of the whole nation by the solemn and public performance of the Christian ritual in one of their own most stately sanctuaries, it was Montezuma who warned him of the danger of thus provoking to the utmost his priests and priest-led people, betrayed the growing disaffection, and made Cortes aware that the fires of the volcano were brooding, and ready to burst, beneath him. According to Bernal Diaz, "Montezuma, at a solemn conference, declared to Cortes that he was extremely grieved at the manifestation of the will of his gods that we should all be put to death, or expelled from Mexico. He therefore, as our sincere friend, earnestly recommended that we should not run the risk of incurring the indignation of his subjects, but should save our lives by a retreat whilst that remained within our power." From this moment the Spaniards slept upon their arms, with their cannon

pointed, and with every precaution against surprise. "We were full of terror of being attacked by the whole force of a numerous and warlike people, exasperated by the insults we had heaped on their sovereign and their religion."*

Cortes had sent the master shipbuilder, Lopez, with Aztec artificers, to the coast, to build vessels for their return to Spain—but it is said with secret instructions to delay their completion.

It was at this perilous juncture that he achieved the most wonderful of all his wonderful exploits. He received intelligence that a Spanish force had landed, under a leader of reputation, boldly announcing that they came, if not with an imperial commission, with superior authority, to supersede, to degrade, to lead him away from the scene of his conquests. The whole of this army seemed to be impregnated with the implacable hostility of his old enemy, Velasquez, the governor of Cuba, who had fitted out the expedition, and was eager to seize the golden prize from his grasp. This force was well appointed—in number three times as great as the whole of that under Cortes—perhaps four times, at least, as great as that which he could bring into the field against them. Yet, in an incredibly short time, Cortes is marching back to Mexico at the head of the troops who came to depose him, now mingled, if not altogether in cordial amity, yet with outward unanimity, among his own veteran soldiers; he has cajoled by smooth language—he has bribed, he has beaten his enemies into his own ranks; the general, Narvaez, is his prisoner; and he finds himself at the head of a much larger Spanish force, with artillery, ammunition, and all the necessities of war, returning to the capital, unhappily, not to support, but save, if possible, the feeble and ill-commanded garrison whom he had left in Mexico.

It is not the least testimony to the transcendent abilities of Cortes, that, unless perhaps where Sandoval was in command, wherever he was not personally present all went wrong. Alvarado, whom he had left at the head of the troops in Mexico, had no one quality of a captain but intrepid courage. The massacre of six hundred Aztec nobles, unarmed, during the peaceful celebration

* Not merely is Mr. Prescott's narrative in this part more full and circumstantial than that of De Solis, but the impression is entirely different. De Solis slurs over the daring insult to the religion of the country, and the scene of the Christian service in a part of one of the Mexican temples, so strikingly told by Mr. Prescott. According to his view, Montezuma grew impatient of the presence of the Spaniards, more than hinted that the purposes of their embassy had been fulfilled, and that it was now time for them to depart. He says little more on the profound religious excitement than "that the devil wearied Montezuma with horrible menaces, giving to his idols a voice, or what seemed a voice, to irritate him against the Spaniards." Robertson is more full and particular than De Solis; but Mr. Prescott has seized, we think, with as much accuracy as picturesqueness of description, the real turning point in the fortunes of the Spaniards.

of a religious ceremony, had at length maddened the whole people to revolt. There is no direct information whether the cruelty or rapacity of Alvarado, or some secret intelligence of a conspiracy, (not improbable, when the Mexicans saw that their whole city was now held in check by but a handful of the Spaniards,) had prompted this ill-timed and ill-conducted mimicry of the great blow struck by Cortes at Cholula; but from this time the whole Aztec nation was leagued in implacable hostility to the Spaniards. Alvarado and his garrison were shut up in the fortress, in danger of perishing by famine, (for all the markets had ceased,) and still more by want of water. Cortes, now at the head of seventy horse, and five hundred foot, was advancing, not to the peaceful reoccupation of the capital, but to the rescue—he could scarcely hope the timely rescue—of his men. Through a silent and unpeopled country, over the silent and unpeopled lake, through the silent and unpeopled streets of Mexico, he arrives at the gates of the fortress, and unites his whole force to encounter the multiplying dangers.

Even Cortes himself allowed his Spanish pride to blind his cool and sagacious judgment. He treated Montezuma, who still protested his fidelity to the Spanish cause, with the most galling contempt. When he spurned “the dog of a king” from his presence, he not only utterly broke the spirit of the unhappy monarch, but by violating that divinity which, according to the Aztec feeling, “still hedged the king,” he abandoned all the advantage which he had hitherto gained by the possession of the royal person. By a still more fatal and unaccountable error he released at that moment the brother of Montezuma, a bold warrior, who no doubt spread abroad the intelligence of this last insult to the emperor, and set himself at once at the head of the insurrection. Cortes had yet to learn the terrible energy of a nation's despair; the tame submission with which the Aztecs had up to this time borne the foreign yoke, and endured plunder, insult, the injury to their king, the occupation of their capital, the contemptuous outrage on their religion, had led him to a false estimate of his own immeasurable superiority: the conquest, instead of being achieved, was hardly begun.

No passage in the Spanish conquest of Mexico is so well known, or had been told so well, as the conflict within the city, the death of Montezuma, the storming of the temple; the retreat of the Spaniards over the broken causeways and the chasms where the bridges had been destroyed;—all the awful adventures of the *Noche Triste*, the melancholy night. Mr. Prescott (and it is saying much in his favor) does not fail in this great trial of his strength; he maintains throughout the clearness and animation of his narrative. We pass reluctantly over the death of Montezuma. Faithful, it should seem, to the last, he desired to be taken to the battlements, and endeavored to repress the furious onset of his people. At first the

sight of the emperor commanded awe: but the silence soon gave place to the language of contempt and indignity. They taunted him as a woman; they heaped contumely upon his head. At length, probably supposing that he had withdrawn, they discharged a volley of arrows and of stones against the spot where he had stood. A stone struck him on the head, and he fell senseless: he recovered, but his heart was broken; he obstinately refused all remedies, pined away and died. We must make room for Mr. Prescott's storming of the temple:—

“Cortes, having cleared a way for the assault, sprang up the lower stairway, followed by Alvarado, Sandoval, Ordaz, and the other gallant cavaliers of his little band, leaving a file of arquebusiers and a strong corps of Indian allies to hold the enemy in check at the foot of the monument. On the first landing, as well as on the several galleries above, and on the summit, the Aztec warriors were drawn up to dispute his passage. From their elevated position they showered down volleys of lighter missiles, together with heavy stones, beams, and burning rafters, which, thundering along the stairway, overturned the ascending Spaniards, and carried desolation through their ranks. The more fortunate, eluding or springing over these obstacles, succeeded in gaining the first terrace, where, throwing themselves on their enemies, they compelled them, after a short resistance, to fall back. The assailants pressed on, effectually supported by a brisk fire of the musketeers from below, which so much galled the Mexicans in their exposed situation that they were glad to take shelter on the broad summit of the *teocalli*.

“Cortes and his comrades were close upon their rear, and the two parties soon found themselves face to face on this aerial battle-field, engaged in mortal combat in presence of the whole city, as well as of the troops in the court-yard, who paused, as if by mutual consent, from their own hostilities, gazing in silent expectation on the issue of those above. The area, though somewhat smaller than the base of the *teocalli*, was large enough to afford a fair field of fight for a thousand combatants. It was paved with broad, flat stones. No impediment occurred over its surface, except the huge sacrificial block, and the temples of stone which rose to the height of forty feet, at the further extremity of the arena. One of these had been consecrated to the cross; the other was still occupied by the Mexican war-god. The Christian and the Aztec contended for their religions under the very shadow of their respective shrines; while the Indian priests, running to and fro, with their hair wildly streaming over their sable mantles, seemed hovering in mid-air, like so many demons of darkness urging on the work of slaughter.

“The parties closed with the desperate fury of men who had no hope but in victory. Quarter was neither asked nor given; and to fly was impossible. The edge of the area was unprotected by parapet or battlement. The least slip would be fatal; and the combatants, as they struggled in mortal agony, were sometimes seen to roll over the sheer sides of the precipice together. Cortes himself is said to have had a narrow escape from this dreadful fate. Two warriors, of strong muscular frames, seized on him, and were dragging him violently towards the brink of the pyramid.

Aware of their intention, he struggled with all his force, and, before they could accomplish their purpose, succeeded in tearing himself from their grasp, and hurling one of them over the walls with his own arm. The story is not improbable in itself, for Cortes was a man of uncommon agility and strength. It has been often repeated; but not by contemporary history.

"The battle lasted with unintermitting fury for three hours. The number of the enemy was double that of the Christians; and it seemed as if it were a contest which must be determined by numbers and brute force, rather than by superior science. But it was not so. The invulnerable armor of the Spaniard, his sword of matchless temper, and his skill in the use of it, gave him advantages which far outweighed the odds of physical strength and numbers. After doing all that the courage of despair could enable men to do, resistance grew fainter and fainter on the side of the Aztecs. One after another they had fallen. Two or three priests only survived to be led away in triumph by the victors. Every other combatant was stretched a corpse on the bloody arena, or had been hurled from the giddy heights. Yet the loss of the Spaniards was not inconsiderable: it amounted to forty-five of their best men; and nearly all of the remainder were more or less injured in the desperate conflict.

"The victorious cavaliers now rushed towards the sanctuaries. The lower story was of stone, the two upper were of wood. Penetrating into their recesses, they had the mortification to find the image of the Virgin and Cross removed. But in the other edifice they still beheld the grim figure of Huitzilopochtli, with his censor of smoking hearts, and the walls of his oratory reeking with gore—not improbably of their own countrymen. With shouts of triumph the Christians tore the uncouth monster from his niche, and tumbled him, in the presence of the horror-struck Aztecs, down the steps of the *teocalli*. They then set fire to the accursed building. The flame speedily ran up the slender towers, sending forth an ominous light over city, lake, and valley, to the remotest hut among the mountains. It was the funeral pyre of paganism, and proclaimed the fall of that sanguinary religion which had so long hung like a dark cloud over the fair regions of Anahuac."—Vol. ii., p. 297.

There is a fine epic interest in the midnight retreat along the causeways. The battle, from its local circumstances, is perfectly distinct and intelligible; while, on the Spanish side, the individual feats of valor, the personal exploits of Alvarado, Velasquez, Sandoval, and above all of Cortes himself, awaken breathless sympathy. We watch for the emerging of the survivors of that gallant band, out of the wild confusion and darkness, over the chasms of the broken bridges, over the lost artillery, the treasure thrown away in the last agony of flight, over the bodies of their own men and horses mingled with the heaps of slaughtered Mexicans, as for the winding up of a romance: and how touching is the close:—

"The Spanish commander dismounted from his jaded steed, and, sitting down on the steps of an Indian temple, gazed mournfully on the broken files as they passed before him. What a spectacle did they present! The cavalry, most of them dis-

mounted, were mingled with the infantry, who dragged their feeble limbs along with difficulty; their shattered mail and tattered garments dripping with the salt ooze, showing through their rents many a bruise and ghastly wound; their bright arms soiled, their proud crests and banners gone, the baggage, artillery—all, in short, that constitutes the pride and panoply of glorious war, forever lost. Cortes, as he looked wistfully on their thinned and disordered ranks, sought in vain for many a familiar face, and missed more than one dear companion who had stood side by side with him through all the perils of the conquest. Though accustomed to control his emotions, or, at least, to conceal them, the sight was too much for him. He covered his face with his hands, and the tears, which trickled down, revealed too plainly the anguish of his soul."—Vol. ii., p. 340.

But if the mind of Cortes was once bewildered by the pride of success, how did it rise to meet adversity? In one week after the retreat along the causeway, with his diminished and broken force, without his artillery, with almost all his crossbows gone, with but few of his horses, with many of his men and himself severely wounded, he fights the great battle of Otumba against the whole force of the Mexican empire; he wins it by his own personal prowess in killing the commander of the hostile army. Yet this wonderful man, to whom all the other contemporary writers assign this crowning exploit, in his despatch to the emperor, notices it in these words:—"We were engaged during the greater part of the day, until it pleased God that one should fall, who must have been a leading personage amongst them, as at his death the battle ceased." It was the quick eye of Cortes which saw the importance of the death of this cacique, as well as his strong arm which struck him down. Well may Mr. Prescott say that these modest words form a beautiful contrast to the style of panegyric in others.

In the hour of his darkest disaster, Cortes never despaired of the final subjugation of Mexico. The battle of Otumba secured the fidelity of the Tlascalans.* There was still a powerful party in that city, headed by Xicotencatl, who urged the abandonment of the Spaniards to their fate; wisely foreseeing that the only security for their own freedom, as well as that of Mexico, was the expulsion of the stranger from the land. But either the old hatred of Mexico, and the dread of her vengeance, or awe of the Spaniards, and the involuntary respect extorted by their valor under these trials, and their unexpected victory, secured the ascendancy of the Spanish party in the senate of Tlascala. The Mexican envoys, who had been sent to organize a general league against the

*De Solis gives an account of the Tlascalcan senate assembling all their best physicians to attend on Cortes; and attributes the cure of his serious wound on the head entirely to their skilful treatment. If Gil Blas is good authority for Spanish medical science, even at a later period, Cortes may have been fortunate in his Indian doctors.

invaders, were dismissed with a stern rejection of their offers. What was still more extraordinary, Cortes at last shamed the dispirited followers of Narvaez, who had shared all the disasters, and tasted nothing of the glory or the gain of his own veterans, into something of the general enthusiasm. Unexpected supplies arrived on the coast, guns and ammunition, and men and horses; and some spell of magic might seem to gather them all, in unhesitating obedience, under his banner.

An unexpected ally impeded, for a time at least, the preparations of the Mexicans. The communication of diseases seems an inevitable evil, which attends the contact of different races, and partly from ignorance of their treatment, partly from the new force which they seem to acquire by being imparted to fresh constitutions, they in general become more than usually destructive. The small-pox had been brought to the shores of Mexico, it is supposed, by a negro, on board of one of the ships, and spread with frightful fatality. The new emperor, Cuiclahuac, was among its victims. Yet eventually the accession of Guatemozin to the throne, gave new vigor and obstinacy to the resistance. The noble valor of Guatemozin retrieved the royal race from the pusillanimity of Montezuma. Numancia or Saragossa were not defended with greater intrepidity or more unshaken endurance than Mexico. We cannot follow the siege in all its strange vicissitudes and romantic adventures; but unless famine and pestilence had assisted in the work of destruction, the issue, notwithstanding the multiplying thousands of Indians, whose aid Cortes was now glad to accept, might have been more doubtful.* Once, it is well known that the Spaniards who had penetrated into the city were driven out of it, and took refuge in their own quarters. It was then that the appalling scene took place, with which we shall close our extracts from Mr. Prescott:—

“It was late in the afternoon when he reached them; but the sun was still lingering above the western hills, and poured its beams wide over the valley, lighting up the old towers and temples of Tenochtitlan with a mellow radiance, that little harmonized with the dark scenes of strife in which the city had so lately been involved. The tranquillity of the hour, however, was on a sudden broken by the strange sounds of the great drum in the temple of the war-god,—sounds which re-

* These numbers evidently increased beyond the control of Cortes. Cortes, in one place, speaks of one hundred and fifty thousand men to nine hundred Spaniards. He was obliged to allow them to plunder on their own account, and thus to snatch a large part of the rewards of their victories from the hands of the Spaniards. There is a still more extraordinary proof of their independent adherence to their old habits—“And that night (the night of a battle in which one thousand five hundred of the most distinguished Mexicans had been slain) our allies were well supplied for their supper, as they took the bodies of the slain and cut them up for food!!”—(*Despatches*, p. 313.) We hope that these were not among the Christian converts.

called the *noche triste*, with all its terrible images, to the minds of the Spaniards, for that was the only occasion on which they had ever heard them. They intimated some solemn act of religion within the unhallowed precincts of the *teocalli*; and the soldiers, startled by the mournful vibrations, which might be heard for leagues across the valley, turned their eyes to the quarter whence they proceeded. There they beheld a long procession winding up the huge sides of the pyramid; for the camp of Alvarado was pitched scarcely a mile from the city, and objects are distinctly visible, at a great distance, in the transparent atmosphere of the table-land.

“As the long file of priests and warriors reached the flat summit of the *teocalli*, the Spaniards saw the figures of several men stripped to their waists, some of whom, by the whiteness of their skins, they recognized as their own countrymen. They were the victims for sacrifice. Their heads were gaudily decorated with coronals of plumes, and they carried fans in their hands. They were urged along by blows, and compelled to take part in the dances in honor of the Aztec war-god. The unfortunate captives, then stripped of their sad finery, were stretched, one after another, on the great stone of sacrifice. On its convex surface, their breasts were heaved up conveniently for the diabolical purpose of the priestly executioner, who cut asunder the ribs by a strong blow with his sharp razor of *itzli*, and thrusting his hand into the wound, tore away the heart, which, hot and reeking, was deposited on the golden censer before the idol. The body of the slaughtered victim was then hurled down the steep stairs of the pyramid, which, it may be remembered, were placed at the same angle of the pile, one flight below another; and the mutilated remains were gathered up by the savages beneath, who soon prepared with them the cannibal repast which completed the work of abomination.

“We may imagine with what sensations the stupified Spaniards must have gazed on this horrid spectacle, so near that they could almost recognize the persons of their unfortunate friends, see the struggles and writhing of their bodies, hear—or fancy that they heard—their screams of agony; yet so far removed, that they could render them no assistance. Their limbs trembled beneath them, as they thought what might one day be their own fate; and the bravest among them, who had hitherto gone to battle as careless and light-hearted as to the banquet or the ball-room, were unable, from this time forward, to encounter their ferocious enemy without a sickening feeling, much akin to fear, coming over them.”—Vol. iii., pp. 135–137.

Cortes himself acknowledges the peril and the desperation of his troops. The following extract from the despatches shows the extremity to which they were reduced:—

“God knows the dangers which they encountered in this expedition. (against Matalcingo,) and also to which we who remained behind were exposed; but as it was the best policy for us to exhibit greater courage and resolution than ever, and even to die in arms, we concealed our weakness as well from our allies as from the enemy; and often, very often, have I heard the Spanish soldiers declare that they only wished it would please God to spare their lives, and make them conquerors of the city, although they should de-

rive no interest nor advantage from it; from which it will be seen to what extremity we were reduced, and on what a slender chance we held our persons and lives."—*Despatches*, p. 304.

Whether their prayers were sincere or not, these were the only terms on which they at length obtained possession of the city. They were literally forced to burn as they went along. All the buildings for splendor or for luxury, for the gorgeous pleasures of the king, or the worship of the idols, went down one by one; and the line of the progress of the Spaniards was marked by the total demolition of the city. They won it, street by street, square by square, and as they won destroyed on either side. The palaces, the aviary, the gardens sunk in the flames, and by their rubbish formed an open and unexposed road for the conquerors. Even the stern heart of Cortes* was touched; he was moved, we may believe, with more generous feelings than the disappointment of his rapacity, as the Queen of the Valley, with all her wealth and splendor, gradually smouldered in ashes, or sunk into the lake. He was master of the beautiful site of Mexico, but Mexico had perished. The state of misery to which the few gallant survivors were reduced is strangely shown in their characteristic language to Cortes, when summoned to surrender:—

"They said to me, that since they regarded me as the offspring of the sun, and the sun in so short a space of time as one day and one night revolved around the whole world, I ought therefore to despatch them out of life in as brief a space as possible; and thus deliver them from their troubles: for they desired to go to heaven to their Orchilobus, (qu.) who was waiting to receive them into a state of peaceful repose."—*Despatches*, p. 322.

They fought till they had no way to fight but over the bodies of the slain. The siege lasted for seventy-five days; of the amount of carnage, it is impossible to form any conjecture. Cortes, on one occasion, speaks of 12,000—in others of 50,000—killed in one conflict. And this warfare was carried on in the name and under the Cross of Christ!

De Solis, like a skilful dramatist, closes his book with the catastrophe of the capture of Guatemozin. Mr. Prescott carries us on through the shifting vicissitudes of the life of Cortes, his popularity in Spain, his favor at the court, his later disastrous adventures in other parts of the Ameri-

* "Considering that the inhabitants of the city were rebels, and that they discovered so strong a determination to defend themselves or perish, I inferred two things; first, that we should recover little or nothing of the wealth of which they had deprived us! and second, that they had given us occasion and compelled us utterly to exterminate them. On this last consideration I dwelt with most feeling, and it weighed heavily on my mind." After describing the more "noble" and more "gay and elegant" buildings, he adds, "Although it grieved me much, yet as it grieved the enemy more, I determined to burn these palaces."—*Despatches*, p. 280.

can continent. De Solis, no doubt, broke off where he did, not only to heighten the effect of his work, but lest he should be constrained to darken the brilliant panegyric of his hero, Cortes. Cortes could restrain his soldiers during the war by his severe discipline; he could support their courage under reverses; but he wanted either the power or the will to restrain the excesses of their rapacity when conquerors. Nor was this in the heat and flush of victory. The foul stain on the Spanish character of Cortes, who, at least, did not set his face, as a flint, against such barbarity, was the treatment of the captive Guatemozin. The emperor, the gallant foe, was cruelly tortured, in order to make him reveal the hiding-place of imaginary treasures. And this was the man whose language Humboldt justly compares to the noblest passages in Greek or Roman story. "When brought before Cortes on his first capture,"—let Mr. Prescott tell the tale:—

"Cortes came forward with a dignified and studied courtesy to receive him. The Aztec monarch probably knew the person of his conqueror, for he first broke silence by saying: 'I have done all that I could to defend myself and my people. I am now reduced to this state. You will deal with me, Malintzin, as you list.' Then laying his hand on the hilt of a poinard, stuck in the general's belt, he added with vehemence, 'Better despatch me with this, and rid me of life at once.' Cortes was filled with admiration at the proud bearing of the young barbarian, showing in his reverses a spirit worthy of an ancient Roman. 'Fear not,' he replied, 'you shall be treated with all honor. You have defended your capital like a brave warrior. A Spaniard knows how to respect valor even in an enemy.'"—Vol. iii., pp. 182, 183.

A darker story is behind; at a later period Guatemozin, for what seems an imaginary, or at least unproved conspiracy, was actually hanged by the command of Cortes.

Thus Mexico became a province of Spain, and a part of Christendom, with what results we can but briefly inquire. History seems to speak, significantly enough, as to the extent of advantage acquired by Spain from these conquests, purchased at the price of so much blood and crime. It is a whimsical notion of the author of the "True-born Englishman," that the devil luckily enabled the Spaniards to discover South America, because the wealth of those provinces, in the hands of any but that proud nation, would have been fatal to the liberties of mankind: thus, by the way, representing the devil as rather more favorable to the liberties of man than might be expected.

"The subtle Prince thought fittest to bestow
On them the golden mines of Mexico,
With all the silver mountains of Peru;
Wealth which would in wise hands the world undo."

For Mexico, we are not without our fears lest Mr. Prescott's glowing description of the reign of Prince Nezahualcoyotl might, under the older

Spanish rule, have awakened some fond regret for the departure of his golden age; and in the present day might contrast not too favorably with the state of the Independent Republic. Mr. Stephen's lively account of his vain search for the government to which he was accredited,* and Madame Calderon de la Barca's very pleasing volumes, do not represent the social order or present condition of things in a very enviable light. We do not quite recollect how many revolutions Madame Calderon witnessed during a residence of a year and a quarter in the capital; not orderly and peaceful revolutions, but such changes as made the shots fly about in all directions, with little discrimination between friend and foe, native or stranger, peaceful inhabitant or exalted partisan. Nature alone in her prodigality is faithful to this favored region. There seems much which is amiable and hospitable in the old Spanish society, and the Indians, though utterly sunk and degraded in their intellectual faculties, seem a gentle race. Yet where God has made such a paradise, we cannot but wish that man were better disposed to cultivate and adorn it. What were a golden age without its peace and happiness?

Christianity here began to add a new world to her conquests. Yet as we cannot but lament that it was not propagated by other means, and presented in a purer form, and has not produced more of its blessed results, it is but just, it is absolutely incumbent upon us, to call to mind the hideous and bloody superstition which it erased from the land. The first conversions to Christianity, it must be acknowledged, were rather summary and expeditious. Even during the conquest, many of the greater caciques in Tlascala, in Tezcuco, and among the other allies, received baptism. Considering that good father Olmedo was altogether ignorant of the language; that all the work of interpretation, in the religious as well as the civil intercourse, was carried on by Aguilar and Donna Marina, with the assistance, at last, of Ortegulla, a young page of Cortes', who acquired some knowledge of the language, the preparatory instruction must have been tolerably compendious. But there was one unanswerable argument: the God of the conqueror—(we fear that we must write, considering the share that the Virgin and the Saints took in the conquest)—the Gods of the white men were the strongest; and if the deities of the Indians allowed themselves to be tumbled headlong from their pedestals, it was a sure sign that their reign was over, and a full justification for the desertion of their altars. It would have been vain, perhaps, to have offered to such con-

verts a more pure and spiritual Christianity. There is, however, an exceedingly curious passage in the despatches of Cortes, relating to the propagation of Christianity, both as characteristic of the conqueror, and as a remarkable testimony to the sentiments of men like Cortes, on the overgrown pride, wealth, and power of the church in Spain. Cortes strongly urges on his master to keep the tenths in the hands of the government; to prosecute the conversion of the natives by the regular clergy, the monks and friars of the different orders, who should reside in their own monastic communities:—

"For if bishops and other prelates are sent, they will follow the custom practised by them for our sins at the present day, by disposing of the estates of the church, and expending them in pageants and other foolish matters, and bestowing rights of inheritance on their sons or relatives. A still greater evil would result from this state of things: the natives of this country formerly had their priests, who were engaged in conducting the rites and ceremonies of their religion; and so strict were they in the practice of honesty and chastity, that any deviation therefrom was punished with death; now, if they saw the affairs of the church and what related to the service of God were entrusted to canons and other dignitaries, and if they understood that these were the ministers of God, whom they beheld indulging in vicious habits and profaneness, *as is the case in these days in Spain*, it would lead them to undervalue our faith and treat it with derision, and all the preaching in the world would not be able to counteract the mischief arising from this source."—*Despatches*, p. 426.

The blind and obstinate hostility of Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, may no doubt have rankled in the mind of Cortes, and made him look upon the higher churchmen with darkening prejudice; but Charles V. must have been astonished at receiving from the New World language so strangely in accordance with the loud cry for the reformation of the church in Germany and throughout Europe. So far Cortes and Luther might seem embarked in one cause; yet, as his precautionary advice was not followed, so we trust his vaticinations were at least not completely fulfilled. If there was more than one Las Casas, such prelates might redeem their order, and propagate Christianity in the hearts of the Indians by the stronger persuasion of veneration and love.

But we must not pursue this subject. We conclude with expressing our satisfaction that Mr. Prescott has given us an opportunity at this time of showing our deep sympathy, the sympathy of kindred and of blood, with Americans who, like himself, do honor to our common literature. Mr. Prescott may take his place among the really good English writers of history in modern times; and will be received, we are persuaded, into that small community, with every feeling of friendly and fraternal respect.

* We have seen some specimens of engravings from Mr. Catherwood's drawings, illustrative of Mr. Stephens' work, on a much larger scale, and giving therefore a much better notion of the extraordinary ruins in Mexico and Yucatan. The whole series promises to be of great interest and importance.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

LETTER FROM CHARLES EDWARDS, ESQ.

MEDHURST, 1816.

THANKS for your congratulations; and take mine in return, on your having escaped free with life, and, what is more important still, without disfigurement. Really, to see a man, in these times, go through ten years' service untouched—Talavera, Busaco, Salamanca, and Waterloo; besides duels, by-skirmishes, and occasional leaps out of windows; might almost make one a believer in "The Special Grace," or the Mussulman doctrine of predestination.

Your kind papers met me at Falmouth, where I landed, from a pilot-boat, on the 14th, after contending thirty hours with such a gale as the very spirit of larceny might have given itself up for lost in. One whole night we had of it, and best part of two days, with top masts struck, top-gallant masts rolled away, hatches battened down, dead-lights shut in, boats gone, spars washed off, (except a few that we lashed across the deck, to avoid being washed off ourselves,) and lower masts groaning, and creaking and straining, as if well inclined, if the hubbub lasted, to make away after their companions.

Never was I so frightened before in all my life—which I attribute entirely to my having lately become "monied." In the onset of the affair, a trifle of a sea took us; beat in all the quarter boards on our weather side; and carried away six water casks, and four pigs, besides the cook-house, the cook in it, and the binnacle. It was night, dark as pitch, and raining. So black, that the man at the helm could not have seen shore if his bowsprit-end had run against it. And then, on a sudden, by the flashes of lightning half a minute long—the whole hopeless, interminable prospect of white foaming water opened before you; with the pigs, and the casks, and the hen-coops, each riding off upon a separate wave as big as Westminster Abbey.

Beggary, time out of mind, has been valiant. He must be brave (perforce) who has no breeches; but the holder of exchequer bills hates instinctively to find himself one moment trespassing upon the moon—flying upwards to impugn the dog-star, as if out of a swing, nine times as high as the gibbet Haman was hanged upon; and, the next, to be sunk down into a cursed bottomless black chasm, with the water, on three sides at least of him, above the pitch of his top-gallant yard, the whole bed of sea, in the ordinary course of fluids coming to their level, being to close fifty feet over his head within the next half second.

And then, in the midst of the provoking darkness, which hides the extent of your danger, and enables you to add just two hundred per cent. to it, arises a vast array of multifarious clatters, to terrify those who don't know their import, and those who do. First, your jeopardy is suggested by the lively rattling of the thunder, the pelting of the

rain, and the hoarse roar of the wind in the rigging. Next, you become interested in the rending and shivering of sails, the rocking and squeaking of yards and masts, the choking and hickuping of pumps, and the frequent crashes of "something gone!"—expecting the next thing that "goes" to be yourself. The lighter accompaniments consisting, chiefly, in a perpetual rush of boiling water under your bow, and the blowing of a score of grampuses (who are evidently waiting for you) in it; these last performers (doubtless the original tritons) spouting, and committing all kinds of *singeries*, in their hilarity; obviously esteeming it a mistake of Providence that it should not be a tempest always!

A man may be as stout as Hercules, and yet not care to be eaten by cetaceous fishes. Did you never observe that the people who bring themselves to subaqueous terminations in and about London, almost always choose to conclude in something like smooth water? Nursery maids take the New River and the Paddington Canal;—lovers, the "Serpentine," and the "Bason" in Hyde Park;—stock-jobbers go to Westminster Bridge and Blackfriars;—whipped school-boys, and desperate 'prentices, into water butts and fish ponds; but no adventurers (at least I don't recollect any) ever jump off London Bridge, where the flood has an angry, threatening appearance. Man, even where he is to be a slave and a fool, finds a satisfaction in being a slave and a fool in his own way. One gentleman conceits to die in battle; another has a fancy to pass in his bed. Many part by corrosive sublimate and laudanum, who would live on if they were bound to use the knife. There are obstacles to the application of the "bare bodkin" more than the high-souled Hamlet could descend to think of; and, for myself, if I were going to be drowned, I confess I should like to meet my fate in quiet water.

But here I am, my friend, on shore; every thought of danger (and of water) over; master of myself, ten years of life and youth, and a hundred thousand pounds of fortune that I never hoped for. Your letter is most welcome. For excuses, let them trouble neither of us. A lapse of intercourse is not necessarily a breach of friendship; and, if it were, the act that made the lapse was mine. "Man proposes," as somebody says, "and God disposes;"—few sublunary resolves can stand against the force of circumstances. I took my course seven years since—at least I think so—not as a man who was without friends, but like a man who wished to keep them. When the sheet-anchor could not hold my vessel, it was as well to drive, and keep the keedge on board. Fools "try" their friends, and lose them—pressing on a toy of glass, as though it were a rock of adamant. They forget the very first condition upon which they hold the feeling they are trusting to; void the lease, and yet marvel when the lord enters for breach of covenant. A man must perish—this is an arrangement in nature—before he can be re-

gretted. The tragic poet dares not, for all Parnassus, save his hero in the last scene. You are mistaken, and you do me injustice, when you say, that I had no "friend" (at the time you refer to) but yourself. I tell you, that at the very moment when, upon deliberation, I "took service" as a private soldier—an act of which I am more proud than of any I ever performed in my whole life!—at that very moment I had a letter in my hand from a woman—God bless her! She was the widow of an officer whom I had once served, and she suspected my condition—entreating me, in terms which I can never forget, though I will not quote them, to share her means (and they were slight ones) till my embarrassments were over. If friendship could have helped me, Heaven knows! here it was in its most agreeable form. But there is a principle of reaction, among the first ordinances of nature, which makes it impossible to profit by such an offer. It seemed a jewel, the thing that was held out to me; but, had I grasped, it would have turned to ashes in my hand. I was famishing, and cool water stood at my lips; but it would have fled and mocked me, had I sought to taste it. Here lies no failure; for, on the point, there is no power in the will of the proposing individual; the obstacle, which is insurmountable, is a parcel of the very system under which we breathe. The precise qualities which procure a man offers of assistance, are those (nine times in ten) he would sacrifice by accepting it.

Few people will give away, even their money, to a crouching coward—a dependant—a hanger-on; and yet what else than these can he be who consents to live upon the bounty of another! The romantic generosity of Mrs. —'s character was excited by what she took to be a corresponding principle of chivalry in mine. She would have saved a man, (she guessed from death,) whom certain qualities, which she liked, went to endanger; and forgot to think of the folly which had brought him into peril, in surprise at the unshrinking obduracy with which he stood to meet it. Why, you see, a man's very vanity, in a situation like this, leaves him no choice but to be cut up and devoured. From the moment that I listened to a thought of safety, I ceased to be the hero that the lady took me for. I should have been absolutely an impostor if I had accepted her offer; for, the very instant that I even paused upon it, it became the property of somebody else. You must be burned—there is no help for it—if you wish to be a martyr. You must die (though it is unpleasant) before your name can be emblazoned on your tomb. I desire to wrong no man's feeling; but the course you complain of is the course which I should take again. Assistance from "friendship" is always bought dearly, and turns out generally to be good for nothing when you have it. You part, in a sad state of the market, with, perhaps, a good character; and, after the bargain is concluded, find that you have got in payment a bad shilling.

But a truce to past troubles, unless it be to laugh at them. Did I not tell you, even when I was falling—did I not tell you that I should rise again? It is but yesterday that I stood in the world alone, without rank, reckoning, or respect; that I was a nameless creature, without rights, without possessions, without even personal liberty; and to-day, I, the same "Charles Edwards"—helped by no man—thanking none—I breathe my horse on ground that is mine own, and am a "lord" and a gentleman of worship! I went forth as a sold and purchased slave; and, Mameluke like, I have returned as a chief and a conqueror. Charles Edwards—"rogue Wellborn!"—"Lord" of the manor of Medhurst! and the "lancepraside" hath two bankers;—the "rough-rider" knows when it shall be "quarter-day!" Yesterday my estate was an empty stomach, and Chelsea was my inheritance! and to-day, there is a gentleman who cannot stand straight in my presence, shows the rentroll of my "landed property;" and talks of "rents," "farms," "seoffiments," "fisheries," "waifs," "strays," and "commonable rights!"—

Come to me, if possible, for I am full of business; and my head might be in a better condition for transacting it. People who inherit fortunes from their fathers, never guess even at the real advantages of wealth. You never got a true feeling of the deliciousness of having money—no, not even from seeing half your acquaintances go without it. But, for me! I am just bursting as from darkness into the broad blaze of sunshine—from bondage into freedom uncontrolled—from childish helplessness, into the strength and power of a giant! My quarrel always with life was, that a man could not work his way into a house in Grosvenor Square, until a narrower house might serve his desires, and be more than sufficient for his necessities. There was no path by which a man could make a fortune to himself, and sit down to dissipate it in profusion, even at thirty. I had a thought once of going to the bar—I scarcely know how or why. But, when I peeped into a court of law, and saw the bare results of years of puzzlement!—the "damned Hebrew, or parchment as thick as a board," what was the net product of eyes poured out, and brains distracted! and the Chancellor himself, the *enfant gaté* of forensic fortune—suffering arguments, and reconciling absurdities, for eight or ten hours every day—even if he got off for that!—I found myself, (with the power of locomotion, and two shirts,) incomparably the richer man of the two! His lordship had the peerage; but I could walk "i' the sweet air." He held the seat of honor; but I was at liberty to "depart the court." Like the Frenchman in Montaigne's tale, who had his choice to be hanged or married, I cried, "Drive on the cart!"—it was cheaper to starve than, (on such terms,) to earn the money! But now—when I have the money, Robert—and have it—as only it becomes worth having—without the earning!—when I have it

honorably too, and conscientiously—in my own undoubted right! no kidnapped prodigy of ninety to break in upon my graceful leisure, with fables of cajolement, plunder, and desertion! no heiress wife, even though young and beautiful, made bold by an unreasonable settlement, to hint that my extravagances, or infidelities, are committed, in all senses, at her cost!—the luxury—the splendor—the free agency—that all my life I have been thirsting for, are mine! Not a wild scheme that I have dreamed of but takes a “local habitation,” and a show of accomplishment! Not a light wish but now seems feasible, sitting—only unpossessed, because I may possess it when I will. How many a woman have I adored—and fled from—lest I might make her estate as desperate as my own! How many a man, whom I could have trampled, have I suffered to insult over me, when those I loved might have been injured by my triumph! I was prudent, and forbearing, and humble, where the tempers of some would have given way. I was modest, and shunned collision, where I felt myself the weaker vessel. I did not care even to be fought with, where the contest would have been felt a matter of hardship by my antagonist. I “abode my time” in suffering and in silence—but that time is come at last! and what I owe in the world, both of good and ill, please Heaven! shall now be paid to the utmost farthing. If it was sport while the poor bear was chained, the scene may change now he has broke free. I have never complained of the abuse of strength by others; let none complain of its reasonable exercise by me. I will ask no account for what has been done in the past, but the right shall be mine to do now for the future. I will seek for no combat with any man alive; but it shall go hard, if, with some, I have not the benefit of a victory.

And this seems very heroic, all of it, and very foolish, when I meant to be in the best humor in the world. But the fact is, I have had a touch or two of the *piquant* here—my recollection just a little stirred up—since my arrival. I came to England, prepared to be pleased at all points. Home shows delightfully, to the imagination at least, after six years' absence. And then there was the white bread in the hotels of Falmouth, and its blue-eyed Saxon beauties—and the incomparable fresh butter—and the cream!—I felt my heart cleave to my country the moment I sat down to breakfast. So I saddled at once, finding my cavalry *sain et sauf*, (which I had shipped from Figuera a week before me,) and rode at a round rate through Cornwall, Devonshire, and Somerset, purposing, as “greatness” was “thrust upon me,” to lose no time in taking possession of it; but, when I got to Bath, an idea struck me—it was for the first time—that Sir Walter Beauvoir—(my grandfather's executor)—that it might not be pleasant, under all “existing circumstances,” for me to have to introduce myself to the worthy baronet.

We had not been always strangers, in times past, the Beauvoir family and your very devoted servant; and there had been a cessation of usual attention to him, at a certain time when perhaps he was not acting so cautiously as he might have done. Whether I distrusted my own merits, or their “friendship,” I wrote a formal letter of announcement, covered all over with family arms and black wax, and sent it forward by a courier, addressed to Sir Walter; which done, I again put on, with as much speed as I could muster, wishing to get a peep, if possible, at my property, without being recognized as the owner of it.

I got to Medhurst before my messenger; but found myself already *cried* at the very Market-cross! I had been hatching devices all the way, to know what people thought about me. I might have spared myself the pains. Most of my grandfather's tenants held beneficial leases; and their “prophetic souls” were on the *qui vive*. My “listing for a horse soldier,” and “going off with the Major's lady”—the whole history was afield, with additions, alterations, and exaggerations. I sent for a hair-dresser, and had it all (without asking) in five minutes. My father's unreasonable postponement gave some offence; my most-to-be-lamented succession still more. I was to make a seraglio of the manor-house in a fortnight; and to get rid of the last acre in a year.

Next day, I sent my own servant to Beauvoir, with a note, setting forth my arrival, and requesting an interview. Signor José wore his foreign livery, and red Montero cap; and departed, upon a very curious Spanish horse, that I have brought over with me, with half the population of Medhurst at his heels. In truth, the horse—you shall see him when we meet—was a *monture* fit for Murat in person! No whipped and curbed-up restive English jade, that you thrust spurs into, and, when he finches, call it spirit; but a beast that will eat of his master's bread, and drink of his cup; never felt a spur in all his life, and knows switches and halters only by report. On my affirmation!—(my attorney shall make affidavit of it)—he is the very steed—the real *Rabican*—sung of by Ariosto—who cheats the sand of his shadow, and on the snow leaves no marks of his footsteps!—who was begotten of the flame, and of the wind!—who might pace dry-shod upon the sea; make his *trottoir* of a zephyr; and for speed!—I forget the rest of the poetry; but I know I bought the animal when he was a colt, and have pampered him ever since, till he is as fleet as a roebuck, and as fierce, in any hands but my own, as a three-days-taken tiger.

And noon brought this inestimable quadruped back, with an answer to my letter, and with so many clowns in admiration of his curvetting, that I was fain to command the locking of his stable door.

Sir Walter's communication was less offensive than I had expected; but my mind was made up as to how I should proceed. Fight always at once,

if possible, where you desire to be quiet—you are sure of peace, after men know that there is nothing to be got by going to war with you. These Beauvoirs are of your *gens de coterie*—your people of the “real caste” and “tone”—(that is, your people who, singly, would be hunted down as owls and bedlamites; but who, as a “set,” have managed to make their joint-stock impudence imposing.) I suspected the reception that I should meet from them; and I waited upon good Sir Walter without my scabbard. There is a *recipe* in some old book—“How to avoid being tossed by a mad bull.” And the instruction given is—“Toss him!” Try the experiment upon the first coxcomb who fancies that you are his inferior;—charge first, and give him to understand roundly that you fancy he is yours. Be coldly supercilious with all “important” catiffs, and most punctual be your attention to the matter in debate; but let no temptation prevail with you to touch on any earthly point beyond it. In business all men are equal. The casting of an account knows no distinction of persons. But remember, that he (whoever he is) stands a babbler, *convict*, who utters one word except to state the sum total of it. Get an observation about the weather, you reply with some—“Thirteen and ninepence!” and your interlocutor is dead. A syllable *de trop* will enable you to decline “general communication,” where no approach to such a state was ever intended. Poor Sir Walter came down, loaded to the very muzzle, to repress “familiarity” on my part; but I found him guilty of “familiarity” himself, and made him bear the penalty of it, before six sentences had been exchanged between us.

“The late gales”—there was no “Happy to see me at Beauvoir!”—“The late gales had rendered my passage from the continent difficult?”

“It had not been pleasant.”—This came after we were seated; and after a salutation such as might pass between the automaton chess-player and the ghost in Don Juan.

I had received letters, of course, from Mr. Dupuis?

“At Figuera, to the 30th ult.”—Followed by a long pause, which I did not move to interrupt.—Mr. Dupuis is my agent and attorney.

“The late Mr. Charlton Edwards,”—in a tone of condescension this and dignified feeling, which made me think that the Lord had delivered the speaker into my hands—“The late Mr. Charlton Edwards, I was perhaps aware, he (Sir W. B.) had much respected?” (I was aware, Robert, that it was very inconvenient for a gentleman to speak, and not to be answered; but, as this observation needed no reply, I made none, except a look of polite surprise.)

“That sentiment alone”—here a little hesitation, occasioned by my omitting such an opportunity to protest—“that sentiment alone had induced him to take upon himself the somewhat laborious duty of an executor. There was a legacy

of five hundred pounds attached to the office; but,”—(this was the *coup* that was to annihilate me)—“that—remembrance—he should desire to be excused from accepting.”

As six cards at least more, in the potential way, were coming, I trumped the suit at once.—“In that case, the sum would pass to any charity which he (Sir Walter) might be disposed to favor; and I would endeavor to add something which should be worthy to accompany so munificent a donation.”—This reply, not even pointed with contempt at his thinking to overwhelm me by giving up five hundred pounds that I knew he did not want—(had it been ten thousand, with all the family consequence, I had trembled for my patrimony)—this reply, given without the movement of a single muscle, carried us straight to reading “the will;” during which operation, the Baronet’s temper was once or twice nearly overcome by the irreverent neighing of my Spanish steeds, who challenged all comers, from under the window. We did get through, however—temper, gravity, and all—and, Mr. Dupuis being summoned, Sir Walter and I formally took leave of each other;—I, on my part tolerably well satisfied that I had waived no dignity in our brief conference, but a little surprised why a man, who certainly disliked me, should have chosen to act as my executor; and he, as I thought, somewhat disconcerted (though I never guessed with what abundant cause) at the seeming change in my humor, and habits of acting and thinking.

My grandfather has left me every thing; and (with all his eccentricities he had spirit and taste,) his last order was, that Mouckton Manor should be kept, to my arrival, just as he himself had lived in it. It would be nonsense to talk of feeling any deep regret for the death of a man whom I scarcely ever saw; but—I am not quite ungrateful—if half his money would bring him to life again, he should have it. As the case stands, however, I get a diamond, you see, not only ready polished, but ready set to my hand, and had nothing to do when I arrived here, but walk straight into the well ordered mansion of my forefathers—from the which imagine me writing, just now, to bid you welcome! So despotic, that not a mouse, if I list be silent, dare raise his voice within three stories of me! Conceive me, sole master, and disposing of all, in the very last house of all the world, in which I ever looked to dispose of any thing. Sitting in a small room, more stocked with roses than with books, which takes rank as “The Library.” Before a buhl-table, at a long narrow Gothic window—people did not care for too much light, even before there was a tax upon it—really extant, I believe, (the window,) since the days of Henry the VII. My great grandfather, I know, traced it back to Rufus, and had his doubts if it might not have been carried up to the Conqueror. With a great deal of nicknack furniture, and some good Flemish pictures; a most unnecessary list of

servants, and an incomparable cellar of wine, to amuse me within; and, without—a strange, irregular, semi-barbarous kind of prospect to look at,—almost grotesque, but not displeasing—between the remote, and the immediate. Beyond my “ring fence,” a branch of the Wye—a real steeple (the church of Medhurst)—the village inn, with a rising sun (for a sign) that might warm all Lapland through a three months’ winter—and abundance, generally, of heath, and rivulet, and hill, and copse, and forest, part of mine own, and part belonging to the demesne of Beauvoir.

More at home, a great multiplication of flower-gardens, kitchen-gardens, and nurseries, shrubberies, zig-zag walks, and fish-ponds, with duck islands in the middle of them. The view total supplying a sort of index to the various tastes of the twelve last incumbents on the property; each of whom thought it a pity to undo any trifle that had been done by his predecessor; and all had such a horror of either rebuilding, or radical alteration, that a surveyor, caught even making a sketch upon the estate, would have found no more quarter from them than a beast of prey.

For my own part, I rather agree, I confess, in this opinion about the “surveyor.” I think, in strictness, he belongs to that class of artists—as the attorney—the house-painter—or the undertaker—in whose very callings there is something that men shudder at the recollection of. Certainly, if I were in trade myself, I would be a wine-merchant, or a confectioner, or of some craft, so that people should be able to look me in the face without abhorrence; and, for the present at least, I shall so far affirm my ancestral piety, as to let Monckton remain with all its inconveniences. But you lost much, I assure you, that—not meeting me on the coast—you missed the solemnity of my “taking possession.”

The “joyful tidings” of the “new lord’s” arrival had been promulgated as soon as I reached Beauvoir Castle; and, in the hall of that edifice, (on leaving it,) I found my steward, attended by a couple of keepers, waiting to “pay his duty.” I mounted my grey horse, who had collected all the domesticities of Sir Walter’s stable department in criticism round him; and the unearthly immovableness which I preserved of feature, joined to a few words of Spanish, in which I now and then spoke to José, seemed to root the very thought of my ever having been an offending Adam out of men’s minds. As I rode through the village, “attended,” the landlord of the Rising Sun stood, in devotion, to bow to me. His wife and daughters were forthcoming too in their best clothes; and there was my barber, looking as though he wished, for once, he had been less communicative; although, as he told me afterwards, by way of excuse, “he had only said what every body else said.” So we moved forward—the bells ringing for my “happy return.” I, in the front, with Mr. Poundage a little to the rear on one side, and Mr.

Dupuis, wishing to be familiar, but not quite knowing how to compass it, on the other; José behind, and the two keepers taking long shots, (in the way of comprehension,) at his English; and the folks of the village taking off their hats as we passed—to the whole of which I returned a grave courtesy; but as though it disturbed my own reflections, rather than otherwise.

I shall be in the commission of the peace, Robert, within these six months, and set people in the stocks! The five hundred pound legacy goes to repair “the church,” as the joint gift of Sir Walter Beauvoir and myself. The parish-officers have already waited upon me in procession! I shall have a tablet put up for me of marble, and a vile verse inscribed on it in Latin—and “Charles Edwards, Esq.” gave—so much—to “beautify.”—“Anno MDCCCXVI.”—with an *obit* when I die, and a notice who was church-warden when I was buried.

On my arrival at “Home,” every thing—the short notice considered—was creditable to my friend Poundage’s taste. People, all very alarmed and anxious, as becoms those who have to get their own livelihood. At the lodge-gate I found my “porter” in deep black, and reverence, “deeper still.” My gardeners were scattered at different points about the grounds, that I might not, by any accident, go too far without having worship paid me. Before the grand entrance, (to which Mr. Poundage rode forward, with a bow for permission,) stood my serving-men, in full livery. My housekeeper, fat and oppressive, as an ancient lady ought to be, ready to welcome me. Half a dozen of my chief tenants, all “in mourning” (for the “beneficial leases;”) my maid servants peeping here and there, round corners, and out of upper windows. And then, moi—Myself—*Le Grand Homme vient!*—Don’t you see me, Bob!—in my long dark pelisse, able to stand alone with lace and embroidery—upon my grey horse, full sixteen hands high, with his massy furniture, foreign saddle, holsters, pistols, &c., all complete. The whole cavalcade an extremely well got up and imposing affair, I assure you; and one which would have led me to think most puissantly of the chief personage concerned in it, if I had not (on certain previous occasions) enjoyed the advantage of his acquaintance.

My location completed, “domestic duties” commenced; and I could n’t find in my heart (though I shall economize) to discharge any of my people.

Audience to Mrs. Glasse—“Forty years in the family!”—“Hoped my Honor’s breakfast had given my Honor satisfaction.” She must die, I suppose, at Monckton, and be buried at my cost.

Audience to my steward—at breakfast—and told him I was satisfied with his way of doing things. He had a desire, I saw, to fall at my feet, but doubted whether it might not be taken as a liberty. Visit from Mr. Dupuis;—thought he seemed rather a scoundrel, and went through all

his accounts at one sitting!—Cost me seven hours, but completely took down the gentleman's importance. Concluded by making him commit several valuable documents to my own iron chest; and ordered his bill (convinced he'd never live to make it out) for "the morning of the 27th."

Day following, full of business. Opened letters from all the tradesmen within ten miles, craving "orders." Before dinner, made a progress through my whole estate, and went through the ceremonies (legal) of taking possession. Rode my grey horse again, who neighed furiously, bringing every body out of doors at every fresh house or stable he came near. Going home—all the people about quite deafened with this outcry, met one of the junior Beauvoirs, on horseback, in a lane; at the sight of whom, *le dit Rabican* gave such a ferocious neigh, rearing and plunging at the same time, as if for battle, that the Captain's hunter bolted into the hedge, and had nearly overthrown him. I moved slightly, looking at Dupuis—who was riding in great bodily fear, as far as he might from me—and the compliment was (quite as slightly) returned.

But I had a hold all this while (of which I knew nothing) upon the heart of the Beauvoir family; and it procured me the unhopd-for honor of a visit from Sir Walter, almost before I became aware of its existence.

Dupuis let me into the fact first—as a last card against bringing in his bill, and giving up his agency. It was the *borough* of Medhurst, it seems, that formed the grand link between my late grandfather and the people at the castle.

He always gave up the parliamentary interests; but our property is suspected of carrying a majority. Major Beauvoir sits for Medhurst; Sir Walter is one of the members for the county. I was to have been played upon by these good folks as they pleased, and slighted as they pleased into the bargain. But my business-like movements have struck them with alarm. A general election approaches, and, though they are rich, they must not lose Medhurst. I am a beast, instead of (what they hoped to find me) a fool; but my "beneficial leases" are dangerous. And so—though the Beauvoirs are "select"—down came Sir Walter, to trim between his pride and his necessity.

It was really pitiful to see the poor old buzzard, who, you know, is high and mighty, compelled to communicate with a wretch, who would have no notion of any body's being high and mighty at all. First, he had a sort of hope left that I was an ass, and that he might cheat me out of what he wanted, instead of purchasing it. Then, got out of patience at my obstinate formality; but still was sure that any direct overture towards intimacy from him, would remove it. At last, in the midst of the creature's doubt whether *he* would be friends, he suddenly happened to doubt whether *I* would; on which the quibbling was dropped in alarm, and nothing thought of but carrying the point. And

so, two hours after Mr. Dupuis had told me this long election story, "in confidence,"—a confidence to which I just trusted so far, as not to give him the slightest hint how I meant to act upon it in return—though I was a "rough rider," and had a horse that "neighed," I received a morning call from Sir Walter, which ended (sorely against his will) in an invitation to dine at Beauvoir Castle.

If I could make head against the world when I was naked and *pennyless*, I can hardly fear to do so now. You know me, and know how I value the opinion of such people as these; but they are still members of a party, that in some way or other must be dealt with. I shall have to fight my passage, against something perhaps of prejudice, into certain circles to which a man of fortune should have admission. As the first goose might cackle, ten to one the whole flock would follow. This Beauvoir *bidding* was an opportunity to begin the struggle with advantage.

I rode to the castle on horseback, (this took place yesterday,) and arrived as nearly as possible at the last moment; having declined using one of Sir Walter's carriages, "until my own could be put in order." From the very entry of the avenue, I saw what was to be my reception—the evening was tempting, but the windows and balconies were deserted. The "having me" was evidently an "infliction."—I'll try if I can't teach some of the family what "infliction" is.

Dinner was instantaneous—(as I had hoped)—so sparing me an inconvenient preliminary ten minutes in the drawing-room. The party quite private, in order that the open avowal of me might still be got rid of, if possible. We had Sir Walter, pompous, but rather fidgety. We had Lady B., well-bred enough, and not very ill-natured. The two Misses Beauvoirs, looking most determinately—"nothing less than nobility approaches Kitty!" Major B., the gentleman who "sits;" Captain B., the gentleman whom I nearly overthrew; the *gouvernante* of the young ladies; and the parson of the parish.

This was the "bore" party—evidently premeditated; every thing was conducted "in a concatenation," as Goldsmith has it, "accordingly." I was meant—transparently—to be a "lost monster" within the first five minutes; and yet I never enjoyed an entertainment so much, I think, in my life. It is so delicious a *role* to play—and, withal, so easy—when a man is desirous only of being disagreeable! And when I reflected that these lunatic creatures, who really stood personally within the scope of my danger—these "splacknucks," into whose house I would have hired myself as their footman, and, in twelve months, have ruled it as their lord—that they, who were absolutely suitors to me for a boon, and over my prospects, or possessions, could have no breath of influence—that they should be so mad as to desire to distress me, and hope by exhibiting a few common grimaces to succeed!—the thing, so far from

supplying a cause of annoyance, was, as you must perceive, unboundedly jocose and entertaining.

We had the stale farce of silent *hauteur* played off; and a few more modern airs in the peculiarities of eating and drinking. The Misses B. were prodigious in the arrangements of their salad. The Captain—he is of “the Guards”—ate fish with his fingers. But, for the *ton*, I had *carte blanche*, as being a foreigner; and, for the silence, you don’t very easily awe any man where he feels that circumstances make him your master. I talked, if no one else did; and he who talks *pre-pense*, may even “talk” with safety. With Sir Walter Beauvoir, I spoke of property and interests, in a way that made him very anxiously attend to me. The Captain I addressed once, (in reply,) and that in a tone just more steady, the twentieth part of a note, than I had been using with his father—a word more, and I would have apologized for his ill horsemanship on the preceding day. The Misses Beauvoir I took wine with, and would not see that they were fair and inexorable. To Lady B. I ventured a few words, just to show that I could behave decently, if it was my cue to do so. But it was with the Major—the member for Medhurst—that has been—the gentleman for whose immediate convenience my presence was submitted to; it was with him that my high fortune lay; and the gain was greater than I could have even hoped for.

The Major, I believe, is a person that you have no acquaintance with!—I knew something of him, and disliked him, when we both were lads. He had then—allowing for my prejudices—the qualities which compose a brute; but has now acquired cunning enough, in some degree, to conceal them. His early familiarities were with watch-houses; his exploits, the beating of hackney-coachmen, and dandy linen-draperies at Vauxhall. You may recollect the fact, perhaps, of his exchanging out of the Fusileers, at Cheltenham, for having put a tailor (who asked for money, I believe) into the fire!

The man either was troublesome, or his creditors wanted amusement; but he was ordered, I know, to come for payment to a house at which three or four gentlemen were dining; the whole party then made a very facetious assault upon him, in consequence of which Ensign B— had to quit his regiment; and the relatives of the other offenders paid near two thousand pounds to avoid the disgrace of the matter coming into court. Those times are over. Men grow more prudent, if not more honest, as they increase in age. And my friend the Major’s rank and associations have made him a man of fashion; but still he is one of those men, whom, at first sight, you would dislike. There are a description of persons, as we all find out sometimes, whom you can hardly meet, even in the stage-coach, without looking for a quarrel with them. The slightest degree of intercourse

seems to make the event quite certain; and, feeling that, you desperately think that the sooner it happens, and is over, the better. I remember once sitting in the same coffee-room with a man whose deportment absolutely fascinated me. Not a word had passed between us; and yet I felt that I must either instantly insult him, or leave the apartment. Major Beauvoir’s manner yesterday, at our re-introduction, was a curious illustration of the ungovernableness of this particular faculty: it was decidedly repelling, (though not sufficiently so to call for notice,) while, from what followed, I have no doubt that it was meant to be conciliatory.

For he has the infirmity upon him, (this gentleman,) among others, of being easily affected by wine; and the spirit of play, which also constantly attends him, had caught a scent of my ready money. The exposure that followed was good enough to have been bought by encouragement; but his monstrous folly made even encouragement unnecessary. A wild extravagance keeps him constantly poor; and he has not brains enough to make him timid; for, take successful speculators, with the odds ten to one against them generally, and you will find them coarse-minded, obtuse men—acute intellect would see too clearly the chance of overthrow. In spite of all Sir Walter’s exertion, after the first eight glasses, my mere listening became sufficient to draw him out. First, he adverted to the circumstance of our former acquaintance, and drew on valiantly, though I made him pull me all the way. Then we talked of the country—of horses (his and my own) and hunting—my share in the discussion going little beyond monosyllables. From thence it came to arrangements for town, (whither the Major himself was forthwith returning;) and clubs—*mar-lee*—*bets*—introductions—all the circumstances of a currency which I wanted, (the command of,) I was enabled politely, but without the slightest acknowledgment, to decline. At length I rose to take my leave, accompanied to the last possible moment of conversation by Sir Walter, who saw his son’s failure with obvious horror, although the ingenious gentleman himself never suspected it. We descended the great staircase, with solemn deprecation on my part, and immense, though not very happily managed, conciliation on his. But just as the august personage was expressing his hope, under great ardent suffering, that he should early have the pleasure to see me again at Beauvoir Castle, when perhaps something might be suggested, with respect to certain political arrangements, which might operate to the mutual conveniences, and, indeed, advantage, of both our families—just as he got to this point, we reached the lower hall, and my grey horse, who was in waiting, uttered a most extra hyæna-like, and demoniacal neigh. This strange interruption—which was produced, I believe, by the hearing my voice—and at such a juncture too!—disconcerted him completely. He stopped—gulped—recollected himself—doubted

whether to piece his discourse, or begin over again. In the end, the poor Baronet stammered out a parting compliment, even worse turned than that which *Monsieur Rabican* had broken in upon; and I returned home a personage decidedly more hateful to the Beauvoir family than ever, but completely relieved from all anxiety about my reception—as a potentate of the vicinity—in future; and as an object of detestation with the worthy folks, you know, of necessity, an object, if not of terror, of respect.

This, I think, is as it should be. I am *fêted* by these people, and will be farther so: and, when they have gone through the abomination of getting my interest, they shall find that they have lost it. But that they are clumsy impostors, and deserve no such lenity, I could end their anxiety in a word; for, if I really have a majority in the borough, I think I shall sit for it myself. You laugh—but I can't come back to the army, after six years' desertion, to face your Waterloo reputation upon a "lady-peace" establishment. And a seat in Parliament gives a man a semblance of pursuits in life, which (where no trouble attaches) is convenient. You will come over to my election, (if I find I can command the place,) and help to eat the bad dinners, and kiss the people's wives. Drop no word, however, I charge you, in the interim; because I must bamboozle these cockscombs, who meant to bamboozle me. The hook is in their mouths, and I shall be able to keep them on, without giving either a reasonable expectation. The moment they ask my decision, I shall give it against them; and yet, before then, I will have gained all they sought to withhold from me. This is not a world, Robert, in which a man can live by the use of candor, or of liberal principle; and he who is wise will fall into its spirit, and acquire a taste for hollow-heartedness and selfish feeling. To have one's "opinions" always flying out against those of every body else—one's heart pinned upon one's sleeve—is it not to fight too much at a disadvantage? And may there not be some whim in shaking hands with a man very cordially, when you know he means to do you a mortal injury, and when you have digged a countermine, (in the way of surprise,) which, in five minutes, is to blow him to the moon? When I was poor, who ever behaved even fairly to me? And is it not monstrous vanity to expect that I now should behave disinterestedly to those I love not?

Farewell till we meet, which I hope will not be many days; but I must (with the kind aid of Sir W. Beauvoir) stamp my credit in the right way, before I go—here—in Glostershire. I have got a touch, you see, of the true moneyed feeling already—letting policy detain me in one place, when inclination would carry me to another.

Fare you well once more, until we shake hands; which, with you, I would not do, unless I did it honestly. I shall be in town, I believe, by the 28th; and a lieutenant-colonel, I am sure, can

leave a regiment at any time. As a proof that (for my part) we are still upon the same terms that we used to be—ask your father if he will "present" me. I could make old Sir Walter here, I have no doubt, submit to the duty, (and, in case I go to the continent, it may be convenient to me to get this done;) but I would not have him able to say that I ever hoaxed him out of any politeness worth a moment's consideration. Besides, I know enough of your father, to believe that he will feel no hesitation in obliging me; and I write to show you that I can ask a favor from a friend, when it is such a favor as may be conferred by one gentleman upon another.

TO M——

Oh, ask me not how long thy gentle love
Hath dwelt on me;
I only know 't is long enough to prove
Thy constancy.

I cannot pause to number months, or days,
I know alone,
If to be faithful be Love's highest praise,
Thou wear'st the crown.

Oh, thou hast loved me long enough to show
Thou canst not range;
And long enough to bid experience know
How others change.

Oh, long enough for the upbraiding thought,
That ne'er till now
I prized thy love's rich treasure, as I ought,
My all below.

Yes, I have seen full many a dream depart
With faithless speed;
And some, who should have gently used my heart,
Have made it bleed.

And I have rued Affection's broken vow,
And felt the chill
Of Friendship's alter'd eye—but, dearest, thou
Art faithful still.

ENIGMA.

SIR Hilary charged at Agincourt,
Sooth! 't was an awful day?
And though, in that old age of sport,
The rufflers of the camp and court
Had little time to pray,
'T is said Sir Hilary muttered there
Two syllables by way of prayer.

My first to all the brave and proud
Who see to-morrow's sun;
My next, with her cold and quiet cloud,
To those who find their dewy shroud,
Before to-day's be done!
And both together to all blue eyes
That weep when a warrior nobly dies?

From the Foreign Quarterly Review.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, although he has written very little in this way, comes accredited to us by unmistakable manifestations of an original and poetical mind. He is the author of a volume of profound Essays, recently republished in England, under the editorship of Mr. Carlyle, who discovered in him a spiritual faculty congenial to his own. Mr. Emerson was formerly a Unitarian minister, but he embraced the Quaker interpretation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and threw up his church. He is now the editor of a quarterly magazine in Boston. The same thoughtful spirit which pervades his prose writings is visible in his poetry, bathed in the "purple light" of a rich fancy. Unfortunately, he has written too little to ensure him a great reputation; but what he has written is quaint and peculiar, and native to his own genius. From a little poem addressed "To the Humble Bee," which, without being in the slightest degree an imitation, constantly reminds us of the gorgeous beauty of "l'Allegro," we extract two or three passages.

Fine humble-bee! fine humble-bee!
Where thou art is clime for me,
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek—
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!

When the south-wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze,
Silters the horizon wall,
And with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And infusing subtle heats
Turns the sod to violets—
Thou in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow breezy bass.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen,
But violets, and bilberry bells,
Maple sap, and daffodils,
Clover, catchfly, adders-tongue,
And brier-roses dwelt among.
*All besides was unknown waste,
All was picture as he past.*

This is not merely beautiful, though "beauty is its own excuse for being." There is pleasant wisdom hived in the bag of the "yellow-breeched philosopher," who sees only what is fair and sips only what is sweet. Mr. Emerson evidently cares little about any reputation to be gained by writing verses; his intellect seeks other vents, where it is untrammelled by forms and conditions. But he cannot help his inspiration. He is a poet in his prose.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK has acquired a wider celebrity, and won it well. He is the author, amongst other things, of a noble lyric, "Marco Bozzaris." Had he written nothing more he must have earned a high popularity; but he has written much more, equally distinguished by a refined taste and cultivated judgment. But the "Marco Bozzaris," containing not more than a hundred lines, or thereabouts, is his master-piece. It is consecrated to the Greek chief of that name who fell in an attack on the Turkish camp at Laspi, and is, as a whole, one of the most perfect specimens of versification we are acquainted with in American literature. We will not detract from its intrinsic claims by inquiring to what extent Mr. Halleck is indebted to the study of well-known models; for, although in this piece we catch that "stepping in music" of the rhythm which constitutes the secret charm of the "Hohenlinden," we are glad to recognize in all his productions, apart from incidental resemblances of this kind, a knowledge as complete, as it is rare amongst his contemporaries, of the musical mysteries of his art. It is in this Mr. Halleck excels, and it is for this melodiousness of structure that his lines are admired even where their real merit is least understood. We are too much pressed in space to afford room for the whole of this poem, and are unwilling to injure its effect by an isolated passage. The chrysolite must not be broken. But here is an extract from a poem called "Red Jacket," which will abundantly exhibit the freedom and airiness of Mr. Halleck's versification. Red Jacket was a famous Indian chief.

Is strength a monarch's merit? (like a whaler's)
Thou art as tall, as sinewy, and as strong
As earth's first kings—the Argo's gallant sailors,
Heroes in history, and gods in song.

Is eloquence? Her spell is thine that reaches
The heart, and makes the wisest head its sport;
And there's one rare, strange virtue in thy speeches,
The secret of their mastery—they are short.

Is beauty? Thine has with thy youth departed,
But the love-legends of thy manhood's years,
And she who perished, young and broken-hearted,
Are—but I rhyme for smiles and not tears.

The monarch mind—the mystery of commanding,
The god-like power, the art Napoleon,
Of winning, fettering, moulding, wielding, banding
The hearts of millions till they move as one;

Thou hast it. At thy bidding men have crowded
The road to death as to a festival;
And minstrel minds, without a blush, have shrouded
With banner-folds of glory their dark pall.

And underneath that face like summer's oceans,
 Its lip as moveless and its cheek as clear,
 Slumbers a whirlwind of the heart's emotions,
 Love, hatred, pride, hope, sorrow—all, save fear.

Love—for thy land, as if she were thy daughter,
 Her pipes in peace, her tomahawk in wars;
 Hatred—for missionaries and cold water;
 Pride—in thy rifle-trophies and thy scars;

Hope—that thy wrongs will be by the Great Spirit
 Remembered and revenged when thou art gone;
 Sorrow—that none are left thee to inherit
 Thy name, thy fame, thy passions, and thy throne.

The author of these stanzas, strange to say, is superintendent of the affairs of Mr. Astor, the capitalist, who built the great hotel in New York.

W. C. BRYANT.

We have been all along looking out for a purely American poet, who should be strictly national in the comprehensive sense of the term. The only man who approaches that character is William Cullen Bryant; but if Bryant were not a sound poet in all other aspects, his nationality would avail him nothing. Nature made him a poet, and the accident of birth has placed him amongst the forests of America. Out of this national inspiration he draws universal sympathies—not the less universal because their springs are ever close at hand, ever in view, and ever turned to with renewed affection. He does not thrust the American flag in our faces, and threaten the world with the terrors of a gory peace; he exults in the issues of freedom for nobler ends and larger interests. He is the only one of the American poets who ascends to "the height of this great argument," and lifts his theme above the earthly taint of bigotry and prejudice. In him, by virtue of the poetry that is in his heart, such themes grow up into dignity. His genius makes all men participants in them, seeking and developing the universality that lies at their core. The woods, prairies, mountains, tempests, the seasons, the life and destiny of man, are the subjects in which he delights. He treats them with religious solemnity, and brings to the contemplation of nature, in her grandest revelations, a pure and serious spirit. His poetry is reflective, but not sad; grave in its depths, but brightened in its flow by the sunshine of the imagination. His poems addressed to rivers, woods, and winds, all of which he has separately apostrophized, have the solemn grandeur of anthems, voicing remote and trackless solitudes. Their beauty is affecting, because it is true and full of reverence. Faithful to his inspiration, he never interrupts the profound ideal that has entered into his spirit to propitiate the *genius loci*:—he is no middleman standing between his vernal glories and the enjoyment of the rest of mankind. He is wholly exempt from verbal prettiness, from flaunting imagery and New World conceits; he never

paints on gauze; he is always in earnest, and always poetical. His manner is everywhere graceful and unaffected.

Two collections of Mr. Bryant's poems have been published in London, and the reader may be presumed to be already acquainted with nearly all he has written. The following passage, descriptive of the train of thoughts suggested by the shutting in of evening, has appeared only in the American editions:

The summer day has closed—the sun is set:
 Well have they done their office, those bright hours
 The latest of whose train goes softly out
 In the red west. The green blade of the ground
 Has risen, and herds have cropped it; the young twig
 Has spread its plaited tissues to the sun;
 Flowers of the garden and the waste have blown,
 And withered; seeds have fallen upon the soil
 From bursting cells, and in their graves await
 Their resurrection. Insects from the pools
 Have filled the air awhile with humming wings,
 That now are still forever; painted moths
 Have wandered the blue sky, and died again;
 The mother-bird hath broken for her brood
 Their prison-shells, or shoved them from the nest,
 Plumed for their earliest flight. In bright alcoves,
 In woodland cottages with earthy walls,
 In noisome cells of the tumultuous town,
 Mothers have clasped with joy the new-born babe.
 Graves, by the lonely forest, by the shore
 Of rivers and of ocean, by the ways
 Of the thronged city, have been hallowed out,
 And filled, and closed. This day hath parted friends,
 That ne'er before were parted; it hath knit
 New friendships; it hath seen the maiden plight
 Her faith, and trust her peace to him who long
 Hath wooed; and it hath heard, from lips which late
 Were eloquent of love, the first harsh word,
 That told the wedded one her peace was flown.
 Farewell to the sweet sunshine! one glad day
 Is added now to childhood's merry days,
 And one calm day to those of quiet age;
 Still the fleet hours run on; and as I lean
 Amid the thickening darkness, lamps are lit
 By those who watch the dead, and those who twine
 Flowers for the bride. The mother from the eyes
 Of her sick infant shades the painful light,
 And sadly listens to his quick-drawn breath.

When America shall have given birth to a few such poets as Bryant, she may begin to build up a national literature, to the recognition of which all the world will subscribe.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

Only one name now remains, that of the most accomplished of the brotherhood, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. But we have some doubts whether he can be fairly considered an indigenous specimen. His mind was educated in Europe. At eighteen years of age he left America, and spent four years in travelling through Europe, lingering to study for a part of the time at Gottingen.

On his return he was appointed professor of modern languages in Bowdoin College; but at the end of a few years he went into Sweden and Denmark, to acquire a knowledge of the literature and languages of the Northern nations. When he again returned, he accepted the professorship of the French and Spanish languages in Harvard College, Cambridge, which he now holds. We must not be surprised to find his poetry deeply colored by these experiences, and cultivated by a height of refinement far above the taste of his countrymen. But America claims him, and is entitled to him; and has much reason to be proud of this ripe and elegant scholar. He is unquestionably the first of her poets, the most thoughtful and chaste; the most elaborate and finished. Taking leave of the others, with a just appreciation of the last mentioned two or three, and coming suddenly upon Longfellow's lyrics, is like passing out of a ragged country into a rich Eastern garden, with the music of birds and falling waters singing in our ears at every step. His poems are distinguished by severe intellectual beauty, by dulcet sweetness of expression, a wise and hopeful spirit, and complete command over every variety of rhythm. They are neither numerous nor long; but of that compact texture which will last for posterity. His translations from the continental languages are admirable; and in one of them, from the Swedish of Bishop Tegner, he has successfully rendered into English, the "inexorable hexameters" of the original.

We believe nearly all Mr. Longfellow's poems have been reprinted in England; and we hope they may be extensively diffused, and received with the honorable welcome they deserve. From the "Prelude to the Voices of the Night," we take a few stanzas of exquisite grace and tenderness.

Beneath some patriarchal tree
I lay upon the ground;
His hoary arms uplifted he,
And all the broad leaves over me
Clapped their little hands in glee,
With one continuous sound:

A slumberous sound—a sound that brings
The feelings of a dream—
As of innumerable wings,
As, when a bell no longer swings,
Faint the hollow murmur rings
O'er meadow, lake, and stream.

And dreams of that which cannot die,
Bright visions came to me,
As lapped in thought I used to lie,
And gaze into the summer sky,
When the sailing clouds went by,
Like ships upon the sea;

Dreams that the soul of youth engage
Ere Fancy has been quelled;
Old legends of the monkish page,
Traditions of the saint and sage,

Tales that have the rime of age,
And chronicles of Eld.

And loving still these quaint old themes,
Even in the city's throng
I feel the freshness of the streams,
That, crossed by shades and sunny gleams,
Water the green land of dreams,
The holy land of song.

Therefore, at Pentecost, which brings
The spring, clothed like a bird,
When nestling buds unfold their wings,
And bishop's-caps have golden rings,
Musing upon many things,
I sought the woodlands wide.

The green trees whispered low and mild;
It was a sound of joy!
They were my playmates when a child,
And rocked me in their arms so wild!
Still they looked at me and smiled,
As if I were a boy;

And ever whispered mild and low,
"Come, be a child once more!"
And waved their long arms to and fro,
And beckoned solemnly and slow;
Oh, I could not choose but go
Into the woodlands hoar.

Into the blithe and breathing air,
Into the solemn wood,
Solemn and silent everywhere!
Nature with folded hands seemed there,
Kneeling at her evening prayer!
Like one in prayer I stood.

The artful modulation of these lines is not less worthy of critical notice than the pathos of the emotion which literally gushes like tears through them.

THE SPRING SHOWER.

AWAY to that snug nook; for the thick shower
Rushes on stridingly. Ay, now it comes,
Glancing about the leaves with its first drips,
Like snatches of faint music. Joyous thrush,
It mingles with thy song, and beats soft time
To thy bubbling shrillness. Now it louder falls,
Pattering, like the far voice of leaping rills;
And now it breaks upon the shrinking clumps
With a crash of many sounds—the thrush is still.
There are sweet scents about us; the violet hides
On that green bank; the primrose sparkles there:
The earth is grateful to the teeming clouds,
And yields a sudden freshness to their kisses.
But now the shower slopes to the warm west,
Leaving a dewy track; and see, the big drops,
Like falling pearls, glisten in the sunny mist.
The air is clear again, and the far woods
Shine out in their early green. Let's onward then,
For the first blossoms peep about our path,
The lambs are nibbling the short dripping grass,
And the birds are on the bushes.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

"THE MAUVAIS PAS." A SCENE IN THE
ALPS.

ILLUSTRATING A PASSAGE IN THE NOVEL OF ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.

Is there an individual, who has trod at all beyond the beaten track of life, who does not harbor within his mind the recollection of some incident or incidents of so eventful a nature, that it requires but the shade of an association to bring them forward from their resting-place, bright, clear, and distinct, as at the moment of their existence? We suspect there are many who, in their hours of solitude, might be seen to manifest symptoms of such reminiscences; and many who, in the busy world, and amidst the hum of men, might also be seen to start as if visions of things long gone by were again before them, and to shrink within themselves, as though spirits of olden times "were passing before their face, and causing the hair of their flesh to stand up."

It is now many years ago since an event of this character occurred to the writer of these pages. This event, however, such as it is, would, in all probability, never have been recorded on any other tablets than those of his own private thoughts, or have wandered beyond the limited circle of others, who, from natural causes, were interested in its details, had it not, within the last few days, been brought vividly before him, by a writer, whose unrivalled descriptive powers have so often given a semblance of truth to tales of fiction, and excited a thrill on the recital of perils and adventures, where no personal interests were called forth to give additional animation to the narrative. Long before they can peruse these lines, the readers of Blackwood's Magazine will, doubtless, have made themselves acquainted with Anne of Geierstein; and many a mountain traveller, accustomed to sojourn amidst the heights and depths of Alpine scenery, will have borne testimony to the splendid representation of Mont Pilate, arrayed in its gloomy panoply of "vapor, and clouds, and storms," and will have followed the daring Arthur Philipson, with breathless interest, as he wound his cautious way on the ledge of the granite precipice upreared before him: and such readers will scarcely be surprised, that a description like this should make no ordinary impression on one, who, without the slightest pretensions to the vigor and muscular activity of a hardy mountaineer of the fifteenth century, once found himself in a predicament somewhat similar, and oddly enough occasioned by a disaster akin to this, which so nearly proved fatal to the travellers from Lucerne. Believe me, Mr. Editor, when, in Sir Walter Scott's 34th page, I descended from the platform on which the adventurous son bade adieu to his father, and gained with him the narrow ledge, creeping along the very brink of the precipice, days, months, and years shrunk away, and once again did I feel myself tottering on the airy pathway of the very platform, on which I also was once doomed to gaze, with feelings which time can never efface from my recollection.

It was in the year 1818 that I arrived in the village of Martigny, a few days after that memorable catastrophe, when, by the bursting of its icy mounds, the extensive Lake of Mauvoisin was, in an instant, let loose, pouring forth six hundred millions of cubic feet of water over the peaceful and fruitful valleys of the Drance, with the irresist-

ible velocity of sixteen miles an hour, carrying before its overwhelming torrent every vestige of civilized life which stood within its impetuous reach. The whole village and its environs exhibited a dreary scene of death and desolation. The landlord, with many others of his acquaintance and kinsfolk, had been swept from their dwelling-places, or perished in their ruins. The wreck of a well-built English carriage occupied part of the inner court-yard, while the body, torn from its springs, had grounded upon a thicket in the field adjacent. The plains through which the treacherous stream was now winding its wonted course, had all the appearance of a barren desert. Luxuriant meadows were converted into reservoirs of sand and gravel; and crops nearly ripe for the sickle, were beaten down into masses of corrupting vegetation. Here and there amorphous piles of trees, beams, carts, stacks, and remnants of every description of building, were hurled against some fragment of rock, or other natural obstacle, forming, in many cases, it was too evident, the grave-mound of human victims soddening beneath. On the door of the dilapidated inn, the following appeal was attached; but it required no document written by the hand of man to tell the tale of woe: "The floods had passed over it, and it was gone, and the place thereof was known no more."

"AMES GENEREUSES!"

"Un mouvement de la grande nature vient de changer une contrée fertile et riante en un theatre de désolation et de la misère, par l'irruption du lac de Getroz, arrivée le 16 Juin, 1818. Les victimes de cette catastrophe tendent leurs mains vers vous, images de la Divinité bienfaisante. Quelle occasion favorable d'exercer votre vertu favorite, et de verser des larmes de plaisir, en tarissant celles de malheur!"

It was impossible to contemplate effects consequent upon so awful a visitation, without a corresponding excitement of strong curiosity to follow the devastation to its source, and learn, from ocular inspection, the mode in which nature had carried on and completed her dreadful operations. Accordingly, having ascertained that although the regular roads, bridgeways, and pathways, were carried away, a circuitous course over the mountains was feasible to the very foot of the Glaciers of Mont Pleureur, which impended over the mouth of the lac de Getroz, a guide was secured, and with him, on the following morning, before sunrise, I found myself toiling through the pine-woods clothing the steep sides of the mountains to the east of Martigny. It is not, however, my intention to enter into details (though interesting enough in their way) unconnected with the one sole object, which, while I am now writing, hovers before me like Macbeth's dagger, to the exclusion of other things of minor import. Suffice it to say, that as the evening closed, I entered a desolate large scrambling sort of mansion, formerly, as I was given to understand, a convent belonging to some monks of La Trappe; a fact confirmed by sundry portraits of its late gloomy possessors, hung round the dark dismantled chamber in which I was to sleep. The village, of which this mansion had formed a part, had been saved almost by miracle. A strong stone bridge, with some natural embankments, gave a momentary check to the descending torrent, which instantly rose, and in another minute must have inevitably swept away all before it, when fortunately the earth on every side gave

way, the ponderous buttresses of the bridge yielded, down it sunk, and gave immediate vent to the cataract. While I was looking towards the heights of Mont Pleureur, on whose crest the spires and pinnacles of the Glacier de Getroz were visible, a stranger joined the owner of the house in which I was lodged, and from their conversation I collected that he, with a companion, had that day visited the scene of action. "And you saw it," said the landlord. "I did," was the reply. "And your companion?"—"No, for we did not go the lower road," observed the traveller. "How so? did you take the upper?"—"We did," was the answer. "Comment donc! mais le Mauvais Pas?" "I crossed it," replied the traveller. "Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the landlord; "and your companion?"—"He saw what it was and returned." Having heard nothing of any extraordinary difficulties, I paid no great attention to this dialogue, particularly as I had the warranty of my guide that our course would be on the right bank of the river the whole way; and it was evident, that any thing like this *Mauvais Pas* of which the host and traveller spoke, was on the heights above the left bank. I therefore retired to rest, in high spirits, notwithstanding the sombre scowling looks of the monks which seemed to glance on me from their heavy black frames, ornamenting the panelled walls of the cheerless dormitory in which my pallet was stretched—quite sufficient, under other circumstances, to call up the recollection of every ghost and goblin slumbering in the mind, from the earliest traditions of nursery chronicles.

As the journey of the day promised, under the most favorable circumstances, to be not only long but fatiguing, and as some part of the road was represented to be passable for horses, by which much time and labor might be spared, a couple were hired, and another guide engaged to bring them back; and as we quitted the hostelry at early dawn, the beams of the rising sun were just glancing on the highest peaks of the Glaciers, at whose base our excursion was to terminate. For the first three or four hours, sometimes on the plains, at other times defiling over the heights, according to the obstacles interposed by the recent devastation, we pursued our course without any other interest, than that produced by a succession of striking objects, amidst the wildest exhibitions of mountain scenery I ever beheld. At length we descended into a valley of considerable extent, affording a flat platform, of what had been hitherto meadow land, though now a wide plain, on whose surface, in every direction, were scattered, in wild confusion, rocks and stones, and uprooted trees of all dimensions, deposited by the torrent, which had now returned to its original channel, through which it was roaring over a bed of broken granite, forming a sort of loose and coarse shingle. This valley, though unconfined towards the west, was apparently closed in towards the east, immediately in our route, by a stupendous barrier of precipitous rock, as if a mountain, impending over the river on our right, had shot forth one of its mighty arms for the purpose of arresting the waters in their progress. On drawing nearer, however, a fissure, extending from the summit to the base, through the very heart of the rock, was perceptible, through which the river rushed in a more confined channel. It naturally occurred to me, that, unless we could pass onwards through this fissure, we had nothing for it but to return; though having, in our morning's progress, more than once forded the stream,

I concluded that a similar attempt would be made in the forthcoming case, in which I was confirmed by the two guides. When, however, we drew a little nearer, I remarked, that they looked forward repeatedly with something like an anxious cast of countenance, examining here and there at the same time certain blocks of stone embedded in small pools, on which, although there was a communication with the river, the current had no effect, the communication being so far cut off, as to exclude even the slightest ripple. "The waters are higher than they were yesterday," said the one. "And are rising at this moment," replied the other, who was carefully watching the smooth side of one of these detached blocks, half filling the calm and unruffled surface of one of these diminutive lakes. And again, with scrutinizing eyes, they looked forward towards the fissure. "Shall we be able to stem the torrent in yonder spot?" I asked. "We hope so," they hastily answered; "but not a moment must be lost;" and, suiting the action to the word, the horses were spurred on to a full trot, the eyes of both being now intensely fixed on something evidently in or near the river. "Do you see a dark speck at the foot of the left hand precipice?" observed one of the guides to me. "I do."—"Monsieur," continued he, "the waters are rising rapidly, by the increased melting of the snows; and if that dark stone is covered when we reach the fissure, our passage through the torrent will be hazardous, if not impracticable." From that instant every eye was rivetted to the fragment, which, instead of becoming more marked and visible, as we shortened the intervening space, very sensibly diminished in size; and, in spite of every effort to urge the horses on, soon dwindled to a speck, and was almost immediately after, to our great mortification, entirely lost under a ripple of white foam which broke over its highest point. "Ce n'est plus nécessaire d'avancer; il faut s'arrêter," said the guides; "c'est fini." The horses were accordingly reined in. We alighted, and I sat down in despair to secure what I could by sketching the magnificent scene before me; demanding, in a tone of forlorn hope, if it was indeed impossible to proceed, either by scaling the opposing barrier, or by any other circuitous route. On saying this, they again examined the margin of the river; but it gave no encouraging sign. The white foam had even ceased to break over the hidden stone; a swift blue stream was hurrying over it, and not a token of its existence remained. While I continued my sketch, I observed that they were in earnest conversation, walking to and fro, now looking back on the road we had travelled, and then casting their eyes upwards to the right; the only words which I could distinctly hear, for they were more than once repeated, being "Mais il faut avoir bonne tête—a-t-il bonne tête?" At length, one of them came up, and said, "Monsieur, il y a un autre chemin, mais c'est dangereux—c'est un Mauvais Pas! Avez vous bonne tête." As the correctness of any answer to the conclusion of this address depended much upon divers particulars, and certain other data, which it behoved me to know, I begged him to describe a little more at large the precise nature of this *Mauvais Pas*, the ominous term recalling in an instant the words I had heard from the traveller the night before.

The result of my inquiry was very vague. That it was high amongst the mountains, and somewhat

distant, there could be no doubt. That, in order to get to it, we must return, and cross the river below, where, being wider, it might still be forded, were also preliminary steps. The heights on the right were, in the next place, to be gained, and that by no very inviting path, as I could see; but these were not objections calculated to deter me from proceeding, and wherein the real difficulty consisted I could not distinctly discover. "Is, then, this *Mauvais Pas* much more steep and difficult than the ascent which you have pointed out amongst those rocks on the right?"—"Oh, no," was the reply; "it is not steep at all; it is on a dead level."—"Is it, then, very fatiguing?"—"Oh, no; it is by no means fatiguing; the ascent which you see before you, is by far the most fatiguing part of the whole route."—"Is it, then, dangerous, owing to broken fragments of rock, or slippery grass?" for I heard them mutter something about slipping. "Oh, no; it was on hard, solid rock; and, as for grass, there was not a blade upon it. It required but *une bonne tête, car si on glisse, on est perdu!*" This winding up was certainly neither encouraging nor satisfactory; but having so repeatedly heard the danger of these mountain passes magnified, and their difficulties exaggerated, and the vague information above mentioned, saving and except the definitive result, being by no means in itself appalling, I expressed my readiness to try this path, if they had made up their minds to guide me. To this they consented; and preparations were instantly made; "for," added they, "the day is waning, and you will find there is much to be done."

We remounted the horses, and hastened back about a mile to a wide part of the river, which we succeeded in fording without much inconvenience; and soon after left them at a spot from whence they could be sent for at leisure. We then turned again to the eastward, and soon reached the foot of the heights on the left bank of the river, forming the barrier which had checked us on the other side. Up there we proceeded to mount, pressing onwards through brake and brier, boughs and bushes, to the summit of the ridge. During this part of the task, I endeavored to pick up further particulars respecting the winding up of our adventure; but all I could learn was, that, in consequence of the suspension of all communication in the valleys below, by the destruction of the roads and bridges, a chamois-hunter had, since the catastrophe, passed over this path, and that some work-people, on their way to repair the bridges, finding it practicable, had done the same; but that it had never before been used as a regular communication, and certainly never would again, as none, but from sheer necessity, would ever think of taking advantage of it. But, by way of neutralizing any unfavorable conclusions I might draw from these representations, they both added, that, from what they then saw of my capabilities in the art of climbing—for the road, here and there, required some trifling exertion—they were sure I should do very well, and had no reason to fear. Thus encouraged, I proceeded with confidence; and, in the course of rather more than an hour's sharp ascent, we attained a more level surface in the bosom of a thick forest of pine and underwood, fronted, as far as I could guess from occasional glimpses through gaps and intervals, by a grey dull curtain of bare rock. "We are approaching the *Mauvais Pas*," said one of the guides.—"Is it as rough as this?" said I, floun-

dering as I was through hollows of loose stones and bushes. "Oh, no; it is as smooth as a floor," was the reply.—"In a few minutes we shall be on the *Pas*," said the other, as we began to descend on the eastern declivity of the ridge we had been mounting for the last hour. And then, for the first time, I saw below me the valleys of the Drance spread forth like a map, and that it required but half-a-dozen steps at most to have cleared every impediment to my descending amongst them, in an infinitely shorter time than I had expended in mounting to the elevated spot from whence I looked down upon them. And then, too, for the first time, certain misgivings, as to the propriety of going further, and a shrewd guess as to the real nature of the *Mauvais Pas*, flashed across me, in one of those sudden heart-searching thrills, so perfectly defined in the single word *crebling*—a provincial term, expressing that creeping, paralyzing, twittering, palpitating sort of sensation, which a nervous person might be supposed to feel, if, in exploring a damp and dark dungeon, he placed his hand unadvisedly upon some cold and clammy substance, which his imagination might paint as something too horrible to look at.

But whatever were the force and power of these feelings, it was not now the time to let them get the mastery. It was too late to retract—I had gone too far to recede. It would have been unpardonable to have given two Swiss guides an opportunity of publishing throughout the cantons, that an Englishman had flinched, and feared to set his foot where a foreign traveller had trod the day before. On then I went, very uncomfortable, I will candidly confess, but aided and impelled, notwithstanding, by that instinctive sort of wish, common, I believe, to all people, to know the worst in extreme cases. Curiosity, too, had its share—not merely excited by the ultimate object for which I was about to venture myself in mid air, but a secret desire to see with my own eyes a pass which had so suddenly and unexpectedly assumed importance in my fate. And after all, though there were very unequivocal symptoms of something terrible in the immediate vicinity of the undefined grey skreen of rock before me, I had as yet no certainty of its appalling realities.

For a furlong or two no great change was perceptible; there was a plentiful supply of twigs and shrubs to hold by, and the path was not by any means alarming. In short, I began to shake off all uneasiness, and smile at my imaginary fears, when, on turning an angle, I came to an abrupt termination of every thing bordering on twig, bough, pathway, or greensward; and the *Mauvais Pas*, in all its fearfulness, glared upon me! For a foreground, (if that could be called a foreground, separated, as it was, by a gulf of some fathoms wide,) an unsightly facing of unbroken precipitous rock bearded me on the spot from whence I was to take my departure, jutting out sufficiently to conceal whatever might be the state of affairs on the other side, round which it was necessary to pass by a narrow ledge like a mantel-piece, on which the first guide had now placed his foot. The distance, however, was inconsiderable, at most a few yards, after which, I fondly conjectured we might rejoin a pathway similar to that we were now quitting, and that, in fact, this short but fearful *trajet* constituted the substance and sum-total of what so richly deserved the title of the *Mauvais Pas*. "Be firm; hold fast, and keep your eye on the rock,"

said the guide, as I, with my heart in my mouth, stepped out—"Is my foot steadily fixed?"—"It is," was the answer; and, with my eyes fixed upon the rock, as if it would have opened under my gaze, and my hands hooked like claws on the slight protuberances within reach, I stole silently and slowly towards the projection, almost without drawing a breath. Having turned this point, and still found myself proceeding, but to what degree, and whether for better or worse, I could not exactly ascertain, as I most pertinaciously continued to look upon the rock, mechanically moving foot after foot with a sort of dogged perseverance, leaving to the leading guide the pleasing task, which I most anxiously expected every moment, of assuring me that the deed was done, and congratulating me on having passed the *Mauvais Pas*. But he was silent as the grave—not a word escaped his lips; and on, and on, and on did we tread, slowly, cautiously, and hesitatingly, for about ten minutes, when I became impatient to learn the extent of our progress, and inquired whether we had nearly reached the other end. "*Pas encore*."—"Are we half way?"—"A peu près," were the replies. Gathering up my whole stock of presence of mind, I requested that we might pause awhile, and then, as I deliberately turned my head, the whole of this extraordinary and frightful scenery revealed itself at a glance. Conceive an amphitheatre of rock forming, throughout, a bare, barren, perpendicular precipice, of I knew not how many hundred feet in height, the two extremities diminishing in altitude as they approached the Drance, which formed the chord of this arc; that on our left constituting the barrier which had impeded our progress, and which we had just ascended. From the point where we had stepped upon the ledge, quitting the forest and underwood, this circular face of precipice commenced, continuing, without intermission, till it united itself with its corresponding headland on the right. The only communication between the two being along a ledge in the face of the precipice, varying in width from about a foot to a few inches; the surface of the said ledge, moreover, assuming the form of an inclined plane, owing to an accumulation of small particles of rock, which had, from time immemorial shaled from the heights above, and lodged on this slightly projecting shelf. The distance, from the time taken to pass it, I guessed to be not far short of a quarter of a mile. At my foot, literally speaking, (for it required but a semiquaver of the body, or the loosening of my hold, to throw the centre of gravitation over the abyss,) were spread the valleys of the Drance, through which I could perceive the river meandering like a silver thread; but, from the height at which I looked down, its rapidity was invisible, and its hoarse brawling unheard. The silence was absolute and solemn; for, fortunately, not a zephyr fanned the air, to interfere with my precarious equilibrium.

There was no inducement for the lesser birds of the fields to warble where we were, and the lammer-geyers and the eagles, if any had their eyries amidst these crags, were revelling in the banquet of desolation below. As I looked upon this awfully magnificent scene, a rapid train of thoughts succeeded each other. I felt as if I was contemplating a world I had left, and which I was never again to revisit; for it was impossible not to be keenly impressed with the idea, that something fatal might occur within the space of the next few minutes, effectually preventing my return thither

as a living being. Then, again, I saw before me the forms and figures of many I had left—some a few hours, some a few weeks before. Was I to see them again or not? The question again and again repeated itself, and the oftener, perhaps, from a feeling of presumption I experienced in even whispering to myself that I decidedly should. "*Si on glisse, on est perdu!*" how horribly forcible and true did these words now appear,—on what a slender thread was life held! A trifling deviation in the position of a foot, and it was over. I had but to make one single step in advance, and I was in another state of existence. Such were a few of the mental feelings which suggested themselves, but others of a physical nature occurred. I had eat nothing since leaving the old convent, and the keen air on the mountains had so sharpened my appetite, that by the time I had reached the summit we had just quitted, I felt not only a good deal exhausted, but extremely hungry. But hunger, thirst, and fatigue, followed me not on the ledge. A feast would have had no charm, and miles upon a level road would have been as nothing. Every sense seemed absorbed in getting to the end; and yet, in the midst of this unenviable position, a trifling incident occurred, which actually, for the time, gave rise to something of a pleasurable sensation. About midway I espied, in a chink of the ledge, the beautiful and dazzling blossom of the little *gentiana nivalis*, and stopping the guides while I gathered it, I expressed great satisfaction in meeting with this lovely little flower on such a lonely spot. And I could scarcely help smiling at the simplicity of these honest people, who, from that moment, whenever the difficulties increased, endeavored to divert my attention, by pointing out or looking for another specimen. We had proceeded good part of the way, when, to my dismay, the ledge, narrow as it was, became perceptibly narrower, and, at the distance of a yard or two in advance, I observed a point where it seemed to run to nothing, interrupted by a protuberant rock. I said nothing, waiting the result in silence. The guide before me, when he reached the point, threw one foot round the projection, till it was firmly placed, and holding on the rock, then brought up the other.—What was I to do? Like Arthur Philipson's guide, Antonia, I could only say, "I was no goat-hunter, and had no wings to transport me from cliff to cliff like a raven."—"I cannot perform that feat," said I to the guide; "I shall miss the invisible footing on the other side, and—then!"—They were prepared for the case; one of them happened to have a short staff; this was handed forward, and formed a slight rail, while the other, stooping down, seized my foot, and placing it in his hand, answered, "Tread without apprehension, it will support you firmly as the rock itself; be steady—go on." I did so, and regained the ledge once more in safety. The possible repetition of such an exploit was not by any means to my taste, and I ventured to question the foremost guide as to the chance of its recurrence, and the difficulties yet in store. Without pretending to disguise them, he proceeded to dilate upon the portion of our peregrination still in reserve, when the other interrupted him impatiently, and in French instead of Patois, (forgetting, in his anxiety to enjoin silence, that I understood every word he uttered,) exclaimed, "Not a word more, I entreat you. Speak not to him of danger; this is not the place to excite alarm; it is our business to cheer and animate;" and in the true spirit of his advice,

he immediately pointed to a bunch of little gentians, exclaiming, "Eh, donc, qu'elles sont jolies! Regardez ces charmantes fleurs!" Long before I had accomplished half the distance, and had formed a correct opinion as to what remained in hand, the propriety of turning back had more than once suggested itself; but on looking round, the narrowness of the shelf already passed presented so revolting an appearance, that what with the risk to be incurred in the very act of turning about, and forming any thing like a *pirouette* in my present position, added to an almost insurmountable unwillingness to recede, for the reasons above mentioned, and the chance that, as it could not well be worse, the remainder might possibly be better, I decided on going on, estimating every additional inch as a valuable accession of space, with a secret proviso, however, in my own mind, that nothing on earth should induce me to return the same way, notwithstanding the declaration of the guides that they knew of no other line, unless a bridge, which was impassable yesterday, had been made passable to-day; and we knew the people were at work, for a man had gone before us with an axe over his shoulder.

Thus persevering with the speed of a tortoise or a sloth, the solemn slow movements of hand and foot forcibly reminding me of that cautious animal, we at last drew near to a more acute point in the curve of this gaunt amphitheatre, where it bent forward towards the river, and consequently we were more immediately fronted by the precipice forming the continuation of that on which we stood. By keeping my head obliquely turned inwards, I had hitherto in great measure avoided more visual communication than I wished with the bird's-eye prospect below; but there was no possibility of excluding the smooth bare frontage of rock right ahead. There it reared itself from the clods beneath to the clouds above, without outward or visible sign of fret or fissure, as far as I could judge, on which even a chamois could rest its tiny hoof; for the width of whatever ledge it might have been diminished, by the perspective view we had of it, to Euclid's true definition of the mathematical line, namely, length without breadth. At this distance of time, I have no very clear recollection of the mode of our exit, and cannot speak positively as to whether we skirted any part of this perilous wall of the Titans, or crept up through the corner of the curve, by some fissure leading to the summit. I have, however, a very clear and agreeable recollection of the moment when I came in contact with a tough bough, which I welcomed and grasped as I would have welcomed and grasped the hand of the dearest friend I had upon earth, and by the help of which I, in a very few more seconds scrambled upwards, and set my foot once more, without fear of slips or sliding on a rough heathery surface, forming the bed of a ravine, which soon led us to an upland plateau, on which I stood as in the garden of paradise.

In talking over our adventure, one of the guides mentioned a curious circumstance that had occurred either to himself or a brother guide, I forget which, in the course of their practice. He was escorting a traveller over a rather dizzy height, when the unfortunate tourist's head failed, and he fainted on the spot. Whereupon the mountaineer, a strong muscular man, with great presence of mind; took up his charge, threw him over his shoulder, and coolly walked away with him till he

came to a place of safety, where he deposited his burden, and awaited the return of sense; "but," added he, "had such a misfortune occurred on the *Mauvais Pas*, you must have submitted to your fate; the ledge was too narrow for exertion,—we could have done nothing."

We were now not much more than a league from our original destination, a space of which, whether fair or foul, I cannot speak with much precision, so entirely was every thought and sense engrossed in the business which had occupied so large a portion of the last hour. It is merely necessary to inform the reader, that at the expiration of a given time, I stood before the ruins of a stupendous mound formed of condensed masses of snow and ice, hurled down from above by the imperceptible but gradual advancement of the great Glacier of Getroz, nursed in a gorge beneath the summit of Mont Pleureur. Not a moment passed without the fall of thundering avalanches, bounding from rock to rock, till their shattered fragments, floundering down the inclined plane of snow, finally precipitated themselves into the bed of the channel through which the emancipated Lac de Mauvoisin had, in the brief space of half an hour, rushed, after it had succeeded in corroding the excavated galleries, and blown up in an instant its icy barrier.

Seated on a knoll immediately fronting the stage on which this grand scenery was represented, we rested for some time, during which we were joined by one or two of the workmen employed in repairing the roads and bridge to which the guides had alluded; and the first question asked was, "Peut-on le traverser?" No direct answer followed; it was evidently, therefore, a matter of doubt, requiring at least some discussion, during which, although the parties conversed in an under-tone, I again heard, more than once, the disagreeable repetition of "Mais, a-t-il bonne tête?" and a reference was finally made to me. It seems the bridge had been completely destroyed, but some people had that morning availed themselves of the commencement of a temporary accommodation, then in a state of preparation, and had crossed the chasm; and provided Monsieur had a *bonne tête*, there was no danger in following their example. Hesitation was out of the question; for whatever might be the possible extent of risk, in duration and degree it clearly could bear no comparison with the *Mauvais Pas*, the discomfiting sensations of which were still too fresh in my recollection to indulge a thought of encountering them a second time in the same day. I therefore decided on the bridge without more ado, *coute qui coute*; and as we descended towards the river, I had soon the pleasure of seeing it far below me, and plenty of time to make up my mind as to the best mode of ferrying myself over. Of the original arch not a vestige remained; but across two buttresses of natural rock I could distinguish something like a tight rope, at the two extremities of which little moving things, no bigger than mites, were bustling about, and now and then I could perceive one or two of these diminutive monocules venturing upon this apparently frail line of communication. A nearer view afforded no additional encouragement. At a depth of ninety feet below roared the Drance, foaming and dashing with inconceivable violence against its two adamantine abutments, which here confined the channel within a space of about thirty or forty feet. From rock to rock, athwart the gulf, two pine poles had that morning been thrown,

not yet rivetted together, but loosely resting side by side. It certainly was not half

"As full of peril, and advent'rous spirit,
As to o'erwalk a current, roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear;"

but it was, notwithstanding, a very comfortless piece of footing to contemplate. Ye mariners of England, who think nothing of laying out on a topsail yard to pass an earing* in a gale of wind, might have smiled at such a sight, and crossed merrily over, without the vibration of a nerve; but let it be recollected, as a balance for a landsman's fears, that these two spars were neither furnished with accommodating jack-stays, supporting footropes, nor encircling gaskets, to which the outlayer might cling in case of emergence. There they rested, one edge on each projecting promontory of the chasm, in all their bare nakedness. In the morning, I might have paused to look before I leaped; but what were forty or fifty feet of pine vaulting, in comparison with the protracted misery of a quarter of a mile of the *Mauvais Pas*? So forthwith committing myself to their support, on hands and knees I crawled along, and in a few minutes trode again on *terra firma*, beyond the reach of further risk, rejoicing, and, I trust, not ungrateful for the perils I had escaped.

From the London Magazine.

ON THE COOKERY OF THE FRENCH.

Of Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.—*Othello*.

To the Editor of the London Magazine.

SIR,—I am an alderman and button-maker in the city, and I have a taste for sea-coal fires, porter, roast-beef, and the LONDON MAGAZINE. My son Bob, and my daughter Fanny, on the contrary, used to dislike all these good things—the last excepted: and prevailed with me to go and spend a month or two in Paris in the spring of this year. I knew that my son loved me as well as French cookery—and my daughter nearly as well as a French gown: so I unfortunately and affectionately complied with their desire—and have repented it ever since. However, my journey has not been altogether thrown away, as it has reconverted Bob to beef, and as it gives me an opportunity of relating the wonders of French cookery—a matter which in all your articles upon the French you have unaccountably neglected. The subject strikes me as highly important in all points of view: and it is a favorite theory of mine that the manners and tastes of a nation may be known from their cookery even better than from the bumps on their heads. The French Revolution was no doubt brought about by the national fondness for necks of mutton and men à l'*écarlate*: and the national hatred to the English is still visible in their attempts to poison them with their dishes:—a consummation not at all to my taste, even with the

prospect of being buried in *Père la Chaise*. As for me, I am a plain man, alderman and button-maker, and should prefer being interred in *Aldermanbury*.

It has long been the reproach of the French, and you are among those who have echoed it, that they are not a poetical people. But at least their *cooks* are. Must not a cook, Mr. Editor, be inflamed with the double fires of the kitchen and poetry, when he conceives the idea of fountains of love, starry anniseed, capons' wings in the sun, and eggs blushing like Aurora—followed (alas! what a terrible declension!) by eggs à la *Tripe*? I consider their beef in scarlet, their sauce in half mourning, and their white virgin beans, as examples of the same warm and culinary fancy.*

Their ingenuity is sometimes shown in the invention of new dishes, as well as in the epithets they attach to them—another poetical symptom. Not to say any thing of the vulgar plates of frogs, nettles, and thistles, what genius there is in the conception of a dish of breeches in the royal fashion, with velvet sauce—tendons of veal in a peacock's tail—and a shoulder of mutton in a balloon or a bagpipe! Sometimes their names are so fanciful as to be totally incomprehensible, especially if you look for them in a dictionary: such as a palace of beef in Cracovia—strawberries of veal—the amorous smiles of a calf—a fleet with tomato sauce—and eggs in a looking-glass.†

But there are many of their dishes which are monstrous; and in my mind not only prove the French capability of eating poisons, but their strong tendency to cannibalism. Great and little asps—fowls done like lizards—hares like serpents—and pigeons like toads or basilisks—are all favorite dishes: as are also a hash of huntsmen, a stew of good Christians, a mouthful of ladies, thin Spanish women, and four beggars on a plate.—One of their most famous sauces is *sauce Robert*, which I remember to have read of in *Fairy Tales* as the sauce with which the Ogres used to eat children. My daughter found one dish on the *carte* which alarmed us all—*Eglefin à la Hollandaise*: and after trying a long time, she remembered it was something like the name of somebody of whom she had taken lessons of memory. I suppose they had taken the poor devil from his name to be a Dutchman, and had accordingly drest him à la *Hollandaise*.‡

They like liver of veal done to choke you, and pullets like ivory—so called, I suppose, from their

* Puits d'amour.—Anis étouffé.—Ailes de poularde au Soleil.—Œufs à l'Aurore.—Bœuf à l'écarlate.—Sauce en petit deuil.—Haricots Vierges.

† Culotte à la Royale, sauce velouté.—Tendons de veau en queue de paon.—Epaule de mouton en ballon, en musette.—Palais de bœuf en Cracovie.—Fraises de veau.—Ris de veau en amourette.—Flotte, sauce Tomato.—Œufs au miroir.

‡ Grand et petit Aspic.—Poulet en lézard.—Lièvre en serpent.—Pigeon à la Crapeudine, en basilic.—Salmi de Chasseurs.—Compote de bons Chrétiens.—Bouchée de Dames.—Espagnoles maigres.—Quatre mendians.

* The technical term for an operation necessary in reefing topsails.

toughness and hardness. * Other dishes are, on the contrary, quite shadowy and unsubstantial: such as an embrace of a hare on the spit—partridge's shoe-soles—a dart and a leap of salmon—the breath of a rose—a whole jonquil—or biscuits that would have done honor to the Barmecide's feast.*

The French have a way of serving up their dishes which is as extraordinary as the rest. What should we think of whittings in turbans—smelts in dice boxes—a skate buckled to capers—gooseberries in their shifts, and potatoes in their shirts?—Should we not think any Englishman very filthy whose cook should send up cutlets in hair-papers—truffles in ashes—and squirted seed-cakes?—and whose dinner-bell should announce to us what they call a ding-dong in a daub †‡

The military dispositions of the French are discoverable even in their cookery. They have large and small bullets—carbonadoes innumerable—syrup of grenades—and quails in laurels: and I have often heard dishes called for, which sounded to my ear very like “ramrods for strangling,” and “bayonets for the gendarmes.” ‡

But I may easily have been mistaken in French words, when I can't understand what they call English ones—some of which seem to have undergone as complete a change by crossing the Channel, as most of our country-women. Who could recognize, for example, in *wouelche rabette*, *hochepot*, *panequet*, *misies pâës*, *plomboudine*, or *mache potessee*, the primal and delightful sounds of Welch rabbit, hotch-potch, pancake, mince-pies, plumb-pudding, and mashed potatoes? But the French seem fond of far-fetched dishes: they get their thistles from Spain, and their cabbages from Brussels, and their artichokes from Barbary in Turkish turbans. §

The French boast that their language is the clearest in the world. I should like to know what they mean by a skate fried raw, or big little peaches! || I can easily comprehend *mouton à la Gasconne*, however: and an *epigramme d'agneau* is as insipid as a French epigram always is.

As I have got a corner of my paper still blank, my son Bob begs me to let him spoil it with a few verses which he says are German to French cookery: I therefore hasten to conclude my epistle with the expression of my best wishes, and the

* Veau à l'étouffade.—Poulets à l'ivoire.—Accolade de lièvre à la Broche.—Semelles de Perdrix.—Une darde et un sauté de Saumon.—Souffle de rose.—Une jonquille entière.—Biscuits manqués.

† Merlans en turban.—Eperlans en Cornets.—Raie bouclée aux câpres.—Groseilles et pommes de terre en chemise.—Cotelettes en papillotes.—Truffes à la cendre.—Massepains seringués.—Dindon en daube.

‡ Gros et petits boulets.—Carbonades de mouton, &c.—Sirop de grenades.—Cailles aux lauriers. In the last two names our worthy correspondent probably alludes to Ramereaux à l'étouffade, and Beignets à la gendarme.

§ Cardons d'Espagne.—Choux de Bruxelles.—Artichauts de Barbarie en bonnet de Ture.

|| Raie frite à cru.—Pêches grosses-mignonnes.

assurance that I am, with great esteem and respect, Sir, your very obedient humble servant,

TIMOTHY WALKINSHAW,

Button-maker and Alderman.

Aldermanbury.

LE CUISINIER FRANÇAIS verses DR. KITCHINER.

It has often been printed in books,
And I'm going to say it once more,
That the French are a nation of cooks,—
Though I never believed it before.
But now I can make it quite clear—
For who but the devil's own legion
Would stew down a virgin, as here,
And broil out a good Christian's religion!

They say that John Bull o'er his beef
And his beer is a terrible glutton:
Does he eat toads and asps, or the leaf
Or the roots of an oak with his mutton?
Do serpents or basilisks crawl
From his kitchen to lie on his table?
Or lizards or cats does he call
By all the lost nicknames of Babel †‡

We like our Beef-eaters in scarlet,
Not our beef—nor the sauce in half-mourning:
We don't eat a Fanny or Charlotte,
Nor a mouthful of ladies each morning—
(This it shocks all my senses to utter,
Yet with Holy Writ truths you may rank it:)
And they eat a Ray fried in black butter,
And can make a meal on a fowl blanket. §

If we don't like our beef in balloons,
Or a shoulder of lamb in a bagpipe;
Sweet wolves' teeth, or twin macaroons,
Or truffles which they with a rag wipe:
If we don't look for eggs of Aurora,
Nor sheeps' tails prepared in the sun;
And prefer a boil'd cod far before a
Tough skate which is only half done: §

If we don't want our veal done to choke us,
Nor ivory fowls on our dish:
If gendarmes in all shapes should provoke us,

* Bob calls cooks “the devil's own legion,” from the well-known fact of their being sent from even a hotter place than they occupy upon earth. He alludes in the last part of the verse to the kind of bean called *viierge*, which the French stew, and to the bon Chrétien grille.

† Pigeons à la crapaudine.—Aspic de veau.—Feuillage.—Tendons de mouton aux racines.—Lièvre en serpent.—Pigeon en basilic.—Poulet en lézard.—Civet de lièvre.

‡ Bœuf à l'écarlate.—Sauce en petit deuil.—Fanchonnettes.—Charlotte de pommes.—Bouchée de Dames, a kind of cake.—Raie au beurre noir.—Blanquette de volaille.

§ Bœuf en ballon.—Epaule d'agneau en musette.—Dents de loup, a sort of biscuit.—Macarons jumeaux.—Truffes à la Serviette.—Œufs à l'Aurore.—Queues de mouton au Soleil.—Raie frite à cru.

And we like Harvey's sauce with our fish :
 If mutton and airs à la Gasconne
 Don't agree with the stomachs at all
 Of Englishmen—O need I ask one?—
 Let us cut Monsieur Very's, and Gaul.*

From the Dublin University Magazine.

THE NILE.

THE NILE—ITS CREATION—ITS SOURCES—ITS IMPORTANCE—ITS INUNDATION—ITS STATISTICS—ITS BATTLE.

The Nile ! the Nile ! I hear its gathering roar,
 No vision now, no dream of ancient years—
 Throned on the rocks amid the watery war,
 The King of Floods, old Homer's Nile appears.
 With gentle smile, majestically sweet,
 Curbing the billowy steeds that vex them at his feet.

LORD LINDSAY.

The spirit of our fathers
 Shall start from every wave ;
 For the deck it was their field of fame,
 And ocean was their grave.

CAMPBELL.

"EGYPT is the gift of the Nile," said one† who was bewildered by its antiquity before our history was born—(at least he is called the father of it.) A bountiful gift it was, that the "strange, mysterious, solitary stream" bore down in its bosom from the luxuriant tropics to the desert. For many an hour have I stood upon the city-crowning citadel of Cairo, and gazed unweariedly on the scene of matchless beauty and wonder that lay stretched beneath my view. Cities and ruins of cities, palm-forests and green savannahs, gardens, and palaces, and groves of olive. On one side, the boundless desert, with its pyramids ; on the other, the land of Goshen, with its luxuriant plains, stretching far away to the horizon. Yet this is an exotic land ! That river, winding like a serpent through its paradise, has brought it from far regions, unknown to man. That strange and richly-varied panorama has had a long voyage of it ! Those quiet plains have tumbled down the cataracts ; those demure gardens have flirted with the Isle of Flowers,‡ five hundred miles away ; and those very pyramids have floated down the waves of the Nile. In short, to speak chemically, that river is a solution of Ethiopia's richest regions, and that vast country is merely a precipitate. At Pæstum one sees the remnant of a city elaborated from mountain streams ; the Temple of Neptune came down from the Calabrian Hills, by water ; and the Forum, like Demosthenes, prepared itself for its tumult-scorning destiny among the dash of torrents, and the crash of rocks ;§ but here we

* Veau à l'étouffade.—Poulets à l'ivoire.—Noix de veau à la gendarme.—Mouton à la Gasconne.

† Herodotus.

‡ Elephantina.

§ For an account of the formation of the travertine, of which Pæstum was built, see Sir Humphrey's beautiful and imaginative "Last Days of a Philosopher."

have a whole kingdom risen, like Aphrodite, from the wave.

The sources of the Nile are as much involved in mystery as every thing else connected with this strange country. The statue, under which it was represented, was carved out of black marble, to denote its Ethiopian origin, but crowned with thorns, to symbolize the difficulty of approaching its fountain-head. It reposed appropriately on a sphinx, the type of enigmas, and dolphins and crocodiles disported at its feet. In early ages, "caput querere Nili?" was equivalent to our expression of seeking the philosopher's stone, or interest on Pennsylvanian bonds. The pursuit has baffled the scrutiny and self-devotion of modern enterprise, as effectually as it did the inquisitiveness of ancient despots, and the theories of ancient philosophers. Alexander and Ptolemy sent expeditions in search of it. Herodotus gave it up ; Pomponius Mela brought it from the antipodes, Pliny from Mauritania, and Homer from heaven. This last theory, if not the most satisfactory, is, at least, the most incontrovertible, and sounds better than the Meadows of Geesh, where Bruce thought he had detected its infancy in the fountains of the Blue River. This was only a foundling, however,—a mere tributary stream ; the naiads of the Nile are as virgin as ever. I have conversed with slave-dealers who were familiar with Abyssinia, as far as the Galla country, and still their information was bounded by the vague word, south—still from the south gushed the great river.

This much is certain, that from the junction of the Taccaze or Astaboras, the Nile runs a course of upwards of twelve hundred miles, to the sea, without one tributary stream—"example," as Humboldt says, "unique dans l'histoire hydrographique du globe." During this career it is exposed to the evaporation of a burning sun, drawn off into a thousand canals, absorbed by porous and thirsty banks, drank by every living thing, from the crocodile to the pasha, from the papyrus to the palm-tree ; and yet, strange to say, it seems to pour into the sea a wider stream than it displays between the cataracts a thousand miles away. The Nile is all in all to the Egyptian : if it withheld its waters for a week, his country would become a desert ; it waters and manures his fields, it supplies his harvest, and then carries off their produce to the sea ; he drinks of it, he fishes in it, he travels on it ; it is his slave, and used to be his god. Egyptian mythology recognized in it the Creative Principle, and, very poetically, engaged it in eternal war with the desert, under the name of Typhon, or the destructive principle. Divine honors were paid to this aqueous deity ; and it is whispered among mythologists, that the heart's-blood of a virgin was yearly added to its stream,—not unlikely, in a country where they worshipped crocodiles, and were anxious to consult their feelings.

The Arab looks upon all men as aliens who

were not fortunate enough to be born beside the Nile; and the traveller is soon talked into a belief that it affords the most delicious water in the world. Ship-loads of it are annually sent to Constantinople, where it is in great request, not only on epicurean, but anti-Malthusian grounds. The natives dignify their beloved river with the title of "El Bahr," the sea, and pass one-third of their lives in watching the flow, and the remainder in watching the ebb of its mighty tide. The inundation begins in May, attains its full height in August, and thenceforth diminishes, until freshly swollen in the following year. The stream is economized within its channel until it reaches Egypt, when it spreads abroad over the vast valley. Then it is that the country presents the most striking of its Protean aspects: it becomes an archipelago, studded with green islands, and bounded only by the chain of the Lybian Hills and the purple range of the Mokattam Mountains. Every island is crowned with a village, or an antique temple, and shadowy with palm-trees, or acacia groves. Every city becomes a Venice, and the bazaars display their richest and gayest cloths and tapestries to the illuminations that are reflected from the streaming streets. The earth is sheltered from the burning sun under the cool, bright veil of waters; the labor of the husbandman is suspended: it is the season of universal festivity. Boatmen alone are busy; but it would seem to be pleasant business, for the sound of music is never silent beneath those large, white, wing-like sails, that now glitter in the moonlight, and now gleam ruddily, reflecting the fragrant watchfires on the deck. In one place you come upon a floating fair, held in boats, flushed with painted lanterns, and fluttering with gay flags. In another, a bridal procession is gliding by, as her friends convey some bride, with mirth and music, to her bridegroom. On one island you find a shawled and turbaned group of bearded men, smoking their chibouques and sipping coffee. On another a merry band of Arab girls is dancing to the music of their own wild song. And then, perhaps, with the lotus flower

"Wreathed in the midnight of their hair,"

or the light garment, that scarce concealed their graceful forms, folded as a turban, they swim from grove to grove, the quiet lake scarce rippling round their dark bosoms.

Great part of this picture is of rare occurrence, however—the inundation seldom rising to a height greater than what is necessary for purposes of irrigation, and presenting, alas! rather the appearance of a swamp than of an archipelago.

As the waters retire, vegetation seems to exude from every pore. Previous to its bath, the country, like Pelias, looked shrivelled, and faded, and worn out: a few days after it, old Egypt looks as good as new, wrapped in a richly green mantle embroidered with flowers. As the Nile has every

thing his own way throughout his wide domains, he is capricious in proportion, and gives spring in October, and autumn in February. Another curious freak of his is to make his bed in the highest part of the great valley through which he runs; this bed is a sort of savings-bank, by means of which the deposits of four thousand years have enabled it to rise in the world, and to run along a causeway of its own.

This sloping away from the river's edge materially facilitates the irrigation of the country, in which 50,000 oxen, and at least double that number of men are perpetually employed. As I shall have frequent occasions to return to the Nile, in speaking of the commerce, the agriculture, and the mode of travelling in Egypt, I shall only add here, the following statistics from the report of M. Linant, the pasha's chief engineer. At low water it pours into the sea, by the Rosetta mouth, 79,532,551,728—by the Damietta, 71,033,840,640 cubic metres, in every twenty-four hours, making a total of 150,566,392,368. At high water, by the Rosetta branch, 478,317,838,960—by the Damietta, 227,196,828,480—total, 705,514,667,440. The elevation of its waters below the first cataract, *i. e.* 250 leagues from its embouchure, is 543 French feet above the level of the Mediterranean; it runs at the rate of about three miles an hour during its flood, and two during its low water. The deposit of the river, of which the country is composed, yields by analysis, 3-5ths of alumina, 1-5th of carbonate of lime, 1-20th of oxide of iron (which communicates the reddish color to its waters,) some carbonate of magnesia, and pure silex. The mean rate of accumulated soil seems to be about four inches in a century in Lower Egypt; and about forty feet depth of soil has thus been flung over the desert since the deluge. In the time of Mœris the lands were sufficiently watered, if the Nile rose to the height of eight cubits; in the time of Herodotus, it required fifteen cubits; and now the river must rise to the height of twenty-two before the whole country is overflowed. Still, as the deposits increase the Delta, the river is proportionately dammed up, and thus the great watering machine is kept in order by Nature, with a little assistance from Mehemet Ali.

Formerly, when vexed by the armaments of a Sesostris, or the priestly pageants of a Pharaoh, the Nile required seven mouths to vent its murmurs to the sea. In modern times it finds two sufficient: Damietta, of crusading memory, presides over one, and Rosetta, in Arabic, "el Rashid," the birth-place of our old friend Haroun, takes advantage of the other. The former is waited upon by Lake Menzaleh, where alone the real ibis and the papyrus are now found—the latter looks eastward on Lake Bourlos, and westward over Aboukir Bay, of glorious memory.

* * * * *

'T is an old story now, that battle of the Nile;

but, as the traveller paces by these silent and deserted shores, that have twice seen England's flag "triumphant over wave and war," he lives again in the stirring days, when the scenery before him was the arena where France and England contended for the empire of the East. Let us rest from blazing sun and weary travel, in the cool shadow of this palm-tree. Our camels are kneeling round us, and our Arabs light their little fires in silence. They remember well the scenes we are recalling, though many a Briton has forgotten them; and the names of Nelson and of Abercrombie are already sounding faint through the long vista of departed times. We overlook the scene of both their battles, and envy not the Spartan his Thermopylæ, or the Athenian his Salamis. What Greece was to the Persian despot, England was to Napoleon; nation after nation shrank from staking its existence at issue for a mere principle, and England alone was at war with the congregated world, in defence of that world's freedom. Yet not quite alone: she had one faithful ally in the cause of liberty and Christianity, and that ally was—the Turk!

The bay is wide, but dangerous from shoals; the line of deep blue water, and the old castle of Aboukir, map out the position of the French fleet on the 1st of August, '98. Having landed Bonaparte and his army, Brueys lay moored in the form of a crescent, close along the shore. He had thirteen sail of the line, besides frigates and gun-boats, carrying twelve hundred guns, and about eleven thousand men, while the British fleet that was in search of him, only mustered eight thousand men, and one thousand guns. The French were protected towards the northward by dangerous shoals, and towards the west by the castle, and numerous batteries. Their position was considered impregnable by themselves; yet when Hood, in the *Zealous*, made signal that the enemy was in sight, a cheer of anticipated triumph burst from every ship in the British fleet—that fleet which had swept the seas with bursting sails for six long weeks in search of its formidable foe—and now pressed to the battle as eagerly as if nothing but a rich and easy prize awaited them. Nelson had long been sailing in battle-order, and he now only lay to in the offing till the rearward ships should come up. The soundings of that dangerous bay were unknown to him, but he knew that where there was room for a Frenchman to lie at anchor, there must be room for an English ship to lie along-side of him, and the closer the better. As his proud and fearless fleet came on, he hailed Hood, to ask his opinion as to whether he thought it would be advisable to commence the attack that night; and receiving the answer that he longed for, the signal for "close battle" flew from his mast-head. The delay thus caused to the *Zealous*, gave Foley the lead, who showed the example of leading *inside* the enemy's line, and anchored by

the stern, along-side the second ship, thus leaving to Hood the first. The latter exclaimed to my informant—"Thank God, he has generously left to his old friend, still to lead the van." Slowly and majestically, as the evening fell, the remainder of the fleet came on, beneath a cloud of sail, receiving the fire of the castle and the batteries in portentous silence, only broken by the crash of spars, and the boatswain's whistle, as each ship furled her sails, calmly as a sea-bird might fold its wings, and glided tranquilly onward till she found her destined foe. Then her anchor dropped astern, and her fire opened with a vehemence that showed with what difficulty it had been repressed.

The leading ships passed between the enemy and the shore; but when the admiral came up, he led along the seaward side—thus doubling on the Frenchman's line, and placing it in a defile of fire. The sun went down just as Nelson anchored; and his rearward ships were only guided through the darkness and the dangers of that formidable bay, by the enemy's fire flashing fierce welcome as each arrived, and hovered along the line, coolly scrutinizing where he could draw most of that fire on himself. The *Bellerophon*, with gallant recklessness, fastened on the gigantic *Orient*, and was soon crushed and scorched into a wreck by the terrible artillery of batteries more than double the numbers of her own. But before she drifted helplessly to leeward, *she had done her work*—the French admiral's ship was on fire, and through the roar of battle, a whisper went that for a moment paralyzed every eager heart and hand. During the dread pause that followed, the fight was suspended—the very wounded ceased to groan—yet the burning ship continued to fire broadsides from her flaming decks—her gallant crew alone unawed by their approaching fate, and shouting their own brave requiem. At length, with the concentrated roar of a thousand battles, the explosion came; and the column of flame that shot upward into the very sky, for a moment rendered visible the whole surrounding scene, from the red flags aloft, to the reddened decks below—the wide shore, with all its swarthy crowds, and the far-off glittering sea, with the torn and dismantled fleets. Then darkness and silence came again, only broken by the shower of blazing fragments, in which that brave ship fell upon the waters.

Till that moment Nelson was ignorant how the battle went. He knew that every man was doing his duty, but he knew not how successfully;—he had been wounded in the forehead, and found his way unnoticed to the deck in the suspense of the coming explosion. Its light was a fitting lamp for eye like his to read by. He saw his own proud flag still floating everywhere; and at the same moment his crew recognized their wounded chief. The wild cheer with which they welcomed him was drowned in the renewed roar of the artillery, and the fight continued until near the dawn.

Morning rose upon an altered scene. The sun

had set upon as proud a fleet as ever sailed from the gay shores of France: torn and blackened hulls now only marked the position they had then occupied; and where their admiral's ship *had* been, the blank sea sparkled in the sunshine, and the nautilus spread his tiny sail as if in mockery. * * Two ships of the line and two frigates escaped, to be captured soon afterwards; but within the bay, the tricolor was flying on board the Tonnant alone. As the Theseus approached to attack her, attempting to capitulate, she hoisted a flag of truce. "Your battle-flag or none," was the stern reply, as her enemy rounded to, and the matches glimmered over her line of guns. Slowly and reluctantly, like an expiring hope, that pale flag fluttered down from her lofty spars, and the next that floated there was the banner of Old England.

And now the battle was over—India was saved upon the shores of Egypt—the career of Bonaparte was checked,* and the navy of France was annihilated, though restored, seven years later, to perish utterly at Trafalgar—a fitting hecatomb for obsequies like those of Nelson, whose life seemed to terminate as his mission was then and thus accomplished.

MAHMOUDISH CANAL—BATTLE OF ABOUKIR—ATFE.

"And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
Of scourge-driv'n labor, or the one deep cry
Of people perishing—then thinketh, 'I have found
New waters, but I die.'"
ANON.

"The blue steel bit, thro' helmet split,
And red the harness painted;
The virgins long lamented it,
But the dogs were well contented
With the slaughter of that day." "

SCANDINAVIAN RUNE.

ARRIVED at Alexandria, the traveller is yet far distant from the Nile. The Canopic mouth is long since closed up by the mud of Æthiopia, and the Arab conquerors of Egypt were obliged to form a canal to connect this seaport with the river. Under the Mamelukes this canal has also become choked up, and her communication with the great vivifying stream thus ceasing, Alexandria languished—while Rosetta, like a vampire, fed on her decay, and, notwithstanding her shallow waters, swelled suddenly to importance. When Mehemet Ali rose to power, his clear intellect at once comprehended the importance of the ancient emporium. Alexandria was then become a mere harbor for pirates—the desert and the sea were gradually encroaching on its bounda-

* Le principal but de l'expédition des Français d'Orient était d'abaisser la puissance Anglaise. C'est du Nil que devait partir l'armée qui allait donner de nouvelles destinées aux Indes. . . . Les Français une fois maîtres des ports de Corfou, de Malte et d'Alexandrie, la Méditerranée devenait un lac Français.—*Memoirs de Napoleon.*

ries—but the pasha ordered the desert to bring forth corn, and the sea to retire, and the mandate of this Albanian Canute was no idle word—it acted like an incantation to the old Egyptian spirit of great works. Up rose a stately city, containing 60,000 inhabitants, and as suddenly yawned the canal, which was to connect the new city with the Nile, and enable it to fulfil its destinies, of becoming the emporium of three quarters of the globe. In the greatness and the cruelty of its accomplishment, this canal may vie with the gigantic labors of the Pharaohs. Three hundred thousand people were swept from the villages of the Delta, and heaped like a ridge along the destined banks of that fatal canal. They had only provisions for one month, and implements they had few, or none; but the pasha's command was urgent—the men worked with all the energy of despair, and stabbed into the ground as if it was their enemy; children carried away the soil in little hand-fuls; nursing mothers laid their infants on the shelterless banks; the scourge kept them to the work, and mingled blood with their milk, if they attempted to nourish their offspring. Famine soon made its appearance, and they say it was a fearful sight, to see that great multitude convulsively working against time. As a dying horse bites the ground in his agony, they tore up that great grave—30,000 people perished, but the grim contract was completed, and in six weeks the waters of the Nile were led to Alexandria. The canal is forty-eight miles in length, ninety feet in breadth, and eighteen in depth; it was finished altogether in ten months, with the exception of the lock which should have connected it with the river; the bey who had charge of this department lost his contract and his head. * * *

We embarked in a boat not unlike those that ply upon the Grand Canal, and, to say the truth, among the dreary wastes of swamp that surrounded us, we might also have fancied ourselves in the midst of the Bog of Allen. The boat was towed by four wild, scraggy-looking horses, ridden by four wilder, scraggier-looking men—their naked feet were stuck in shovel stirrups, with the sharp sides of which they scored their horses' flanks, after the fashion of crimped cod. It is true, these jockies wore tattered turbans instead of tattered hats, and loose blue gowns instead of grey frize. Yet, still there was something very dis-illusionizing in the whole turn-out—and the mud cabins that here and there encrusted the banks did not tend to obliterate Tipperary associations. But—hold! there is a palm-tree, refreshing to the cockney's eye; an ostrich is trotting along the towing-path; from a patch of firm ground a camel rears its melancholy head; and, by Jove! there goes a pelican! We *must* be in Africa, or else a menagerie has broken loose from Tullamore.

We pass, for some miles, along a causeway that separates the salt-water Lake Madee from Lake Mareotis. Nothing can be more desolate

than the aspects of these two lonely lakes, stretching, with their low swampy shores, away to the horizon. If Alastor, or the spirit of solitude, was fond of yachting, these waters would be the very place for him to cruise in, undisturbed, except by the myriads of wild fowl that kept wheeling, shrieking, and whistling round us. These lakes seem to have been born for one another; but the Pharaohs, like poor-law guardians, saw fit to separate them. Their object, however, the reverse of the said poor law, was to make Mareotis fruitful. A vast mound was raised, which kept the salt-lake at a respectful distance, and until the English invasion in 1801, or at least until the sixteenth century, the greater part of Mareotis was a fertile plain.

Bonaparte, after having defeated the Mamelukes at the Pyramids, had taken possession of Cairo. Having denied Christ in Europe, he acknowledged Mahomet in Asia; having butchered his prisoners at Jaffa, he was defeated by the Butcher* Pasha and Sir Sydney Smith, at Acre; having poisoned part of that army whom he called his children, he started for Paris, and left the remainder to encounter alone, those

"Storms that might veil his fame's ascending star."†

That remainder occupied Cairo, under the gallant and ill-fated Kleber. He had accepted terms of capitulation from the Turks, which Lord Keith refused to ratify. The moment Sir Sydney Smith learned the English admiral's determination, he took upon himself to inform Kleber of the fact, and to advise him to hold his position. The Turks exclaimed against this chivalrous notice as a treachery, and there were not a few found in England to echo the same cry; but the spirit which dictated the British sailor's act was understood in the deserts—a voice went forth among the tents of the Bedouin and the palaces of the despot, that England preferred honor to advantage. Battles, since then, have been fought, and been forgotten—nations have come and gone, and left no trace behind them—but the memory of that noble truthfulness remained, and expanded into a national characteristic; and our countrymen may, at this hour, in the streets of Cairo, hear the Arabs swear "by the honor of an Englishman."

Kleber was assassinated by a fanatic, instigated by those priests whose faith he had offered to profess. The incapable Menou succeeded to the command. Abercrombie anchored in Aboukir Bay on the 2d of March, 1801, but was prevented from disembarking, by a continued gale of wind, until the 8th. Soon after midnight, a rocket from the admiral's ship gave the signal for landing—and the boats, crowded with 6,000 troops, formed in such order as they could maintain on the yet

stormy sea. Then, through the clear silence of the night, the order was given to advance, and the deep murmur of a thousand oars made answer to the cheer that urged them on. It was morning before they approached the shore, which blazed with the fire of the French troops and their protecting batteries—but on they went, as reckless as the breeze that wafted them, till the boats took ground, and then leapt upon the bayonets of the French, advancing through the surf to meet them. The foam soon changed its color as they fought among the very waves, but nothing could stand the British onset long. The 23d, and the flank companies of the 40th, drove the enemy before them, and received and broke a charge of cavalry with the bayonet. The sailors, harnessing themselves to the field artillery, dragged it through the heavy sands, under the fire of the French batteries, to whose roar they replied with loud and triumphant cheers. The British troops now rushed on to the mouths of the cannon, swept the artillery men from their posts, carried the batteries with the bayonet, and stood conquerors on the Egyptian shore. On the 13th, a sanguinary engagement took place, without any result of importance. On the 21st, the English occupied a line extending from the spot we are now sailing over to where the sea glistens yonder, about a mile away. Their right flank was covered by a flotilla of gunboats, under Sir Sydney Smith—the left, by redoubts. The French had partly restored the ancient lines of circumvallation, near Alexandria, which Sir Ralph Abercrombie was preparing to storm, when the enemy's confidence and impetuosity induced him to abandon his strong position, and advance to meet the British in yonder plain, where a few palm-trees still mark the ground they occupied. I need not tell the results of that glorious day. The 42d Highlanders and the gallant 28th regiment there won the proud name which they have since borne stainless through many a bloody field. The seaman there fought side by side in generous rivalry with the soldier—in a word, there Abercrombie conquered, and there Abercrombie fell.

"Sweet in manner, fair in favor,
Mild in temper, fierce in fight;
Warrior nobler, gentler, braver,
Never shall behold the light"

The command devolved upon Lord Hutchinson, a worthy successor of his gallant friend. The powerfully written, manly, and feeling dispatch, in which he announced the victory of Aboukir, and the death of Abercrombie, is, perhaps, as fine a composition as our military records can supply. On the arrival of Sir David Baird from India, by Cosseir and the Nile, Lord Hutchinson advanced upon Alexandria, which capitulated, and soon afterwards Egypt was abandoned both by conquered and conquerors to the Moslem. It was in this last advance that the embankment was cut by the British army. Six dykes were opened, but

*Djezzar—in Arabic, a butcher.

† Sir John Hammer.

the intermediate banks soon gave way, and the sea burst freely into lake Mareotis, submerging forty Arab villages with their cultivated lands. It was seventy days before the cataract subsided into a strait. The sea is now once more banked out by the causeway on which the Mahmoudish canal is carried to Alexandria, and Mehemet Ali intends to drain the lake, and again to restore it to cultivation; but the ruin which the hand of man, "so weak to save—so vigorous to destroy," effected in a few hours, it will take many years to restore.

Gentle reader, we are done with war—and if you should add, "time for us," I can only say, that I felt bound to account for this unpleasant-looking lake, on whose banks I have so long detained you, and, more truly, that I was fain to add my pebble to the cairn upon Abercrombie's grave.

It was midnight when we arrived at Atfé, the point of junction with the Nile—and a regular African storm, dark and savage, was howling among the mud-built houses, when we disembarked there, ankle deep in slime. A crowd of half-naked swarthy Arabs, with flaring torches, looked as if they were welcoming us to the realms of darkness, jabbering and shouting violently, in chorus with the barking of the wild dogs, the roaring of the wind, and the growling of the camels, as a hail-storm of boxes and portmanteaus was showered on their backs; donkies were braying, women shrieking, Englishmen cursing sonorously, and the lurid moon, as she hurried through the clouds, seemed a torch waved by some fury, to light up this scene of infernal confusion. My friend and I fought our way through the demon crowd, gave some of the ban-dogs reason for their howling, and, losing our way in an enclosure, stumbled over one of the only two pigs in the Land of Ham. These unclean animals are kept by a Frenchman, who magnanimously prefers pork to popularity, and is about to establish an hotel in this most diabolical village it has ever been my lot to enter. Marvelling whether we should ever be restored to any of our luggage, we groped our way through sleeping Arabs and kneeling camels, and found, to our pleased amazement, that our baggage, which appeared to scatter as widely and as suddenly as a burst rocket, was piled upon the deck uninjured, and our big-breached servants were smoking on the portmanteau pyramids, as apathetically as two sphinxes.

We are now upon the sacred river—but it is too dark to see its waters gleam—and the shrieking of the steamer prevents us from hearing its waters flow. Alas! alas!—What a paragraph! And, is it possible, ye Naiade of the Nile, that your deified stream is to be harrowed up by a greasy, grunting steam-ship, like the parvenue rivers of vulgar Europe? That stream—that, gushing from beyond the emerald mountains, scatters gold around it in its youth—that has borne the kings of India to worship at ancient Meröe—that has

murmured beneath the cradle of Moses, and foamed round the golden prow of Cleopatra's barge! Unhappy river! Thou, who in thy warm youth hast loved the gorgeous clouds of *Æthiopia*, must thou now expiate thy raptures, like *Ixion*, on the wheel! Yes, for thy old days of glory are gone by—thy veil of mystery is rent away, and with many another sacrificial victim of the ideal to the practical, thou must, forsooth, become useful, and respectable, and convey cockneys. They call thy steamy torturer the *Lotus*, too—adding insult to deep injury; a pretty specimen of thy sacred flower, begrimed with soot, and bearing fifty tons of Newcastle coal in its calyx!

We were soon nizzing merrily up the stream, and after a night spent upon the hard boards in convulsive efforts to sleep, that were more fatiguing than a fox-hunt, we hurried on deck to see the sun shine over this renowned river. Must I confess it? We could see nothing but high banks of dark mud, or swamps of festering slime—even the dead buffalo, that lay rotting on the river's edge, with a pretty sprinkling of goitrous-looking vultures, scarcely repaid one for leaving Europe. In some hours, however, we emerged from the Rosetta branch, on which we had hitherto been boiling our way to the great river, and henceforth the prospect began to improve. Villages sheltered by graceful groups of palm-trees, mosques, santons' tombs, green plains, and at length the desert—the most imposing sight in the world, except the sea. The day passed slowly—the view had little variety—the wild fowl had ascertained the range of an English fowling-piece; the dinner was as cold as the climate would permit—the plates had no knives and forks, and an interesting-looking lady had a drumstick between her teeth, as I pointed out to her the scene of the battle of the Pyramids, which now rose upon our view. That sight restored us to good humor; we felt we were actually in Egypt—the bog of Allen, the canal-boat, the cockney steamer itself, failed to counteract the effect produced upon us by those man-made mountains, girt round with forests of palm trees. As the sun and the champagne went down, our spirits rose, and by the time the evening and the mist had rendered the country invisible, we had persuaded ourselves that Egypt was, indeed, the lovely land that Moore has so delightfully imagined in the pages of the "*Epicurean*."

CAIRO—ITS PORT—VIEW FROM WITHOUT—WITHIN
—THE CITADEL—HELIOPOLIS—PALACE OF SHOOL-
RA—THE SLAVE-MARKET.

While far as sight can reach, beneath as clear
And blue a heaven as ever blessed this sphere,
Gardens, and minarets, and glittering domes,
And high-built temples, fit to be the homes
Of mighty gods, and pyramids, whose hour
Outlasts all time above the water's tower.

MOORE.

MORNING found us anchored off Boulac, the port of Cairo. Toward the river it is faced by facto-

ries and storehouses; within you find yourself in a labyrinth of brown narrow streets that resemble rather rifts in some mud mountain, than any thing with which architecture has to do. Yet here and there the blankness of the walls is broken and varied by richly worked lattices, and specimens of arabesque masonry. Gaudy bazaars strike the eye and relieve the gloom—and the picturesque population that swarms every where keeps the interest awake.

On emerging from the lanes of Boulac, Cairo, Grand Cairo! opens on the view, and never yet did fancy flash upon the poet's eye a more superb illusion of power and beauty than the "city of Victory"* presents from a distance. The bold range of the Mokattam mountains is purpled by the rising sun—its craggy summits are cut clearly out against the glowing sky—it runs like a promontory into a sea of the richest verdure, here wavy with a breezy plantation of olives, there darkened with acacia groves. Just where the mountain sinks upon the plain, the citadel stands upon its last eminence, and, widely spread beneath it lies the city, a forest of minarets with palm trees intermingled, and the domes of innumerable mosques rising, like enormous bubbles, over the sea of houses. Here and there richly green gardens are islanded within that sea, and the whole is girt round with picturesque towers and ramparts, occasionally revealed through vistas of the wood of sycamores and fig-trees that surround it. It has been said that "God the first garden made, and the first city Cain;" but here they seemed commingled with the happiest effect. The approach to Cairo is a spacious avenue lined with the olive or the sycamore; here and there the white marble of a fountain gleams through the foliage, or a palm-tree waves its plummy head above the santon's tomb. Along this highway a masquerading looking crowd is swarming towards the city—ladies wrapped closely in white veils, women of the lower class carrying water on their heads, and covered only with a long blue garment that reveals, but too plainly, an exquisite symmetry in the young, and a hideous deformity in the elders—there are camels perched upon by black slaves, magpied with white napkins round their head and loins—there are portly merchants, with turbans and long pipes, gravely smoking on their knowing-look donkeys—here an Arab dashes through the crowd at full gallop, or a European still more haughtily shoves aside the pompous-looking bearded throng. Water-carriers, calenders, Armenians, barbers, all the *dramatist persona* of the Arabian Nights are there. And now we reach the city wall, with its towers as strong as mud can make them. It must not be supposed that this mud architecture is of the same nature

that one associates with the word in Europe. No! Overshadowed by palm-trees, and a crimson banner with its crescent waving from the battlements, and camels couched beneath its shade, and swarthy Egyptians, in gorgeous apparel, leaning against it, make a mud wall appear a very respectable fortification in this land of illusion.

And now we are within the city! Protean powers! what a change! A labyrinth of dark, filthy, intricate lanes and alleys, in which every smell and sight, from which the nose and eye revolt, meet one at every turn, and one is always turning. The stateliest streets are not above twelve feet wide, and as the upper stories arch over them toward one another, only a narrow serpentine seam of blue sky appears between the toppling verandahs of the winding streets. Occasionally a string of camels, bristling with fagots of firewood, sweeps the streets as effectually of passengers, as the machine which has superseded chummies does a chimney of its soot; lean mangy dogs are continually running between your legs, which afford a tempting passage in this petticoated place; beggars, in rags, quivering with vermin, are lying in every corner of the street; now a bridal, or a circumcising procession, squeezes along, with music that might madden a drummer—now the running footmen of some bey or pasha, endeavor to jostle you towards the wall, unless they recognize you as an Englishman—one of that race whom they think the devil can't frighten or teach manners to. Notwithstanding all these annoyances, however, the streets of Cairo present a source of unceasing amusement and curiosity to the stranger. It has not so purely an oriental character as Damascus; but the intermixture of Europeans gives it a character of its own, and affords far wider scope for adventure than the secluded and solemn capital of Syria. The bazaars are very vivid and varied, and each is devoted to a peculiar class of commodities—thus you have the Turkish, the Persian, the Frank bazaars; the armorers', the weavers', the jewellers' quarters. These bazaars are, for the most part, covered in, and there is a cool and quiet gloom about them which is very refreshing; there is also an air of profound repose in the turbaned merchants, as they sit cross-legged on their counters, embowered by the shawls and silks of India and Persia: they look as if they were forever sitting for their portraits, and seldom move a muscle, unless it be to breathe a cloud of smoke from their bearded lips, or to turn their vivid eyes upon some expected customer—those eyes that seem to be the only living part of their countenance. These bazaars have each a ponderous chain hung across their entrance, to prevent the precipitate departure of any thief that may presume too far upon the listlessness of the shopkeeper; each lane and alley is also terminated by a door, which is guarded at night. In passing along these narrow lanes, you might suppose yourself in some gallery or corridor,

* "El Kahira," the Arabic epithet of this city, means "the Victorious"—whence our word Cairo—in Arabic "Misr."

until you meet a file of donkeys, or of soldiers staggering along their slippery paths.)

Mean-looking and crowded as is the greater part of Cairo, there are some extensive squares and stately houses. Among the former is the Esbekeych, by which you enter the city—a place perhaps twice the size of Stephen's-Green, occupied by a large plantation, divided by wide avenues, and surrounded by a dirty canal. A wide road, shaded by palm and sycamore trees, runs round this canal, and forms a street of tall mud-colored houses of very various architecture; some of these, the verandahs particularly, are very delicately and elaborately worked. The best buildings in the Esbekeych are the palaces of Ibrahim and Abbas Pasha, and the new hotel D'Orient, in which we had pleasant apartments—looking over a cemetery it is true, which was haunted by tribes of ghoul-like dogs. But beyond this

“Thin layer of thin earth between
The living and the dead,”

were gardens, and Kiosks, and palm-groves, and a glimpse of the Nile, and, above all, the Pyramids far in the distance, yet, by their magnitude, curiously confounding the perspective. Another wide space is the Roumeleych, where fairs and markets are held, and criminals are executed, and other popular amusements take place. I am not writing a guide-book, and I shall only at present allude to the citadel, which, as I have observed already, overlooks the town. Mehemet Ali resides in it when he is in Cairo. Here are the remains of Saladin's palace, and the commencement of a magnificent mosque, from the terraced roof of which there is, perhaps, the finest view in the world. There is also a place of great interest to antiquarian cockneys, because it is called Joseph's well, although owing its origin to the Saracen,* not the patriarch. There is also a respectable armory of native workmanship, a printing-press, and a mint which coins annually about 200,000 sterling in gold. This citadel was built by Saladin, and was very strong from its position, before gunpowder gave the command of it to a height further up on the Mokattam height.

But to me, the most interesting spot within these crime-stained precincts, was that where the last of the Mamelukes escaped the bloody treachery of Mehemet Ali. Soon after the Pasha was confirmed by the Porte in the vice-royalty of Egypt, he summoned the Mameluke beys to a consultation on the approaching war against the Wahabees in Arabia. As his son Toussoun had been invested with the dignity of pasha of the second order, the occasion was one of festivity, as well as business. The beys came mounted on their finest horses, in magnificent uniforms, forming the most superb cavalry in the world. After a very flattering reception from the pasha, they were requested to parade in the court of the citadel, which they

* Saladin's name was Joussef or Joseph.

entered unsuspectingly, until the portcullis fell behind the last of the proud procession. They dashed forwards—in vain!—before and around them nothing was visible, but blank, pitiless walls, and barred windows; and the only opening was towards the bright blue sky. Even that was soon darkened by their funereal pall of smoke, as volley after volley flashed from a thousand muskets upon their defenceless and devoted band. Startling, and fearfully sudden as was the death, they met it as became their fearless character. Some with arms crossed upon their mailed bosoms, and their turbaned heads devoutly bowed in prayer; some with flashing swords, and fierce curses, alike unavailing against their dastard and ruthless foe. All that chivalrous and splendid throng, save one, sank rapidly beneath that deadly fire into a red and writhing mass—that one was Enim Bey. He spurred his charger over a heap of his slaughtered comrades, and sprang upon the battlements. It was a dizzy height, but the next moment he was in the air—another, and he was disengaging himself from his crushed and dying horse, amid a shower of bullets. He escaped, and found his well-earned freedom in the desert.

The objects of interest in the neighborhood are very numerous. One day, we rode to Heliopolis, the On of Scripture. It is about five miles from Cairo; and the road lies, for the most part, along a shady avenue passing through luxuriant corn-fields, over which numbers of the beautiful white ibis were hovering. We found nothing but a small garden of orange-trees, with a magnificent obelisk in the centre. Yet here Joseph was married to the fair Asenath; here Plato and Herodotus studied, and here the darkness in which the sun veiled the Great Sacrifice on Calvary, was observed by a heathen astronomer. The obelisks seem never to have been isolated in the position for which they were originally hewn out of the granite quarries of Syene. They terminated avenues of columns or of statues, and bore, in hieroglyphic inscriptions, the destination of the temples to which they led. People talk of the ruins of the temple of the Sun as being discoverable here; and there are reports about a sphinx, but we could discover neither. Here is the garden of Metarich, where grew the celebrated balm of Gilead, presented by the queen of Sheba to Solomon, and brought to Egypt by Cleopatra.* On our return towards Cairo, we were shown the fountain which refreshed, and the tree which shaded, the holy family in their flight to Egypt.

Another day, we went to Shooobra, the palace and garden of Mehemet Ali. We cantered under a noble avenue of sycamores, just wide enough to preserve their shade, and at the end of three miles, came to a low and unpretending gateway, picturesque, however, and covered with parasites.

* For an account of this plant, see the valuable notes to Lord Lindsay's Letters—a book without which no one should visit Egypt, and few should remain in England.

Without, were tents and troops, and muskets piled, and horses ready saddled; but within, all was peace and silence. A venerable gardener, with a long white beard, received us at the entrance, and conducted us through the fairy-like garden, of which he might pass for the guardian genius. There were very few flowers; but shade and greenery are every thing in this glaring climate; and it was very delightful to stroll along these paths, all shadowy, with orange trees, whose fruit, "like lamps in a night of green," hung temptingly over our heads. The fragrance of large beds of roses mingled with that of the orange flower, and seemed to repose on the quiet airs of that calm evening. In the midst of this garden we came to a vast pavilion, glittering like porcelain, and supported on light pillars, forming cloisters, that surrounded a little marble basin, in the centre of which sparkling waters gushed from a picturesque fountain. Gaily painted little boats for the ladies of the harem, floated on the surface of this lake, through whose clear depths, shoals of gold and silver fishes flashed lines of light. In each corner of the building, there were gilded apartments with divans, tables, mirrors and all the simple furniture of an eastern palace, in which books or pictures are never found. The setting sun threw his last shadows on the distant pyramids, as we lay upon the marble steps inhaling the odors of the orange and pomegranate groves, and dreamily listening to the vespers of the busy birds, and the far-off hum of the city, and the faint murmur of the great river; the evening breeze was sighing among the palms and the columns of the palace, when we were startled by another rustle than that of leaves, and two odalisques came laughing by, unconscious of our presence, and unveiled. The old Arab gardener anxiously signed to us to look another way, but for once I preferred European to Egyptian manners, and gazed admiringly on the startled pair. One was a very beautiful Georgian girl—I believe her companion was handsome too; but one such face was enough at a time, and, as it was not very quickly shrouded by her veil, I had a glimpse of as bright—no, that is not the word—but of as beautiful a countenance as poet ever dreamed of. She was very fair, and all but pale—the deep seclusion of her life had left but little color on her cheek, and her exquisitely chiselled features would have been marble-like, but for the resplendent eyes that lent life and lustre to the whole countenance. A brilliant moon lighted our gallop back to Cairo: the gates were long since closed, but a bribe procured us easy admission.

The tombs of the Mamelukes are mausolean palaces, of great beauty, and the richest Saracenic architecture, but now falling fast to decay, and only inhabited, or rather haunted, by some outcast Arabs and troops of wild dogs. They form a grand cemetery of their own, surrounded by the desert.

The petrified forest is about five miles away. My friend R. went there, and described it as a vast shelterless wilderness of sand, strewn with what seemed the chips of some gigantic carpenter's shop. There are no roots, much less appearance of a standing tree.

One of the sights which amused me most was a chicken-hatching oven. This useful establishment is at some distance from the walls, and gives life to some millions of chickens annually. It seems that the hens of Egypt are not given to sedentary occupations; having been hatched themselves by machinery, they do not feel called upon to hatch. They seem to consider that they have discharged every duty to society, when they have produced the egg—no domestic anxiety ruffles their bosoms; they care not whether their offspring becomes a fowl or a fritter, a game cock or an omelette.

We entered a gloomy and filthy hut, in which a woman was squatting, with a dark, little, naked imp at her bosom. She sat sentry over a hole in the wall, and insisted clamorously on backsheesh (a bribe.) Being satisfied in this particular, she consented "to sit over," and we introduced ourselves with considerable difficulty into a narrow passage, on either side of which were three chambers, strewn with fine mould, and covered with eggs, among which a naked Egyptian walks delicately as Agag, and keeps continually turning them with most hen-like anxiety. The heat was about 100°, the smell like that of Harrowgate water, and the floor was covered with egg-shells and struggling chickens. The same heat is maintained day and night, and the same wretched henman passes his life in turning eggs. His fee is one-half the receipt—he returns fifty chickens for every hundred eggs that he receives.

It was the feast of lanterns. As we strolled, by the soft moonlight, under the avenues of sycamore and olive trees that shadow the Eesbekeyeh, we could see through the vistas an extensive encampment in the distance—innumerable lamps, of various colors, and painted lanterns, shone among the tents and the dark foliage. Not only did they glitter on every bough, and on a thousand banners, but scaffoldings were raised, on which they hung in garlands and festoons of light. The very sky above them wore the appearance of a faint dawn: every glimpse of the canals, every leaf in all the grove, shone with their reflected radiance. Of course we were soon struggling through the many-colored crowd of the prophet's worshippers, that thronged the encampment. A Moslem mob is good-tempered and patient beyond belief; and that sea of turbans stagnated as calmly, as if every wave of it was exactly in the position that he wished to occupy. Each tent was crowded to excess by performers or aspirants in a most singular religious ceremony. A ring of men, standing so closely side by side that they supported each other in their exhausting devotions, were vehemently shouting "Allah," or rather "Ullah," in

chorus. They moved their bodies up and down, keeping strict time to this monotonous chant, exhaling their breath pantingly at every exclamation. Many were foaming at the mouth, some were incoherent—all seemed utterly exhausted, and fell, from time to time, among the crowd that was quietly squatted within their excited circle. They were instantly succeeded by others, and this proceeding continued till morning: every tent had its peaceful crowd of squatters, surrounded by its convulsive ring. None of the crowd appeared to take the slightest interest or curiosity about the business before or after they had performed their own part. They then lighted their pipes, where they had room to do so, and gently struggled towards the flower-ornamented stalls, where coffee and sherbet were supplied. It was very refreshing to turn from this melancholy scene, so humbling to human nature, and find oneself in silence and solitude, under the calm, pure skies, with the soothing whispers of the night breeze, as it wandered among the feathery palms.

I pass over, for the present, the schools, the hospitals, and the manufactories of the pasha, Mr. Leider's interesting missionary schools, the museums of Dr. Abbot and Clot Bey, and will only beg the reader's company to one more scene in Cairo.

I went to visit the slave-market, which is held without the city, in the court-yard of a deserted mosque. I was received by a mild-looking Nubian, with a large white turban wreathed over his swarthy brows, and a bernoise, or cloak, of white and brown striped hair-cloth, strapped round his loins. He rose and laid down his pipe as I entered, and led me in silence to inspect his stock. I found about thirty girls, scattered in groups about an inner court. The gate was open, but there seemed no thought of escape. Where could they go, poor things! "The world was not their friend, or the world's law." Some of them were grinding millet between two stones—some were kneading the flour into bread; some were chatting in the sunshine, some sleeping in the shade. One or two looked sad and lonely enough, until their gloomy countenances were lighted up with hope—the hope of being bought! Their faces were, for the most part, wofully blank—not the blankness of despair, but of intelligence; and many wore an awfully animal expression. Yet there were several figures of exquisite symmetry among them, which, if they had been indeed the bronze statues they resembled, would have attracted the inspection of thousands, and would have been worth twenty times the price that was set upon these immortal beings. Their proprietor showed them off as a horse-dealer does *his* cattle, examining their teeth, removing their body-clothes, and exhibiting their paces. He asked only from twenty-five to thirty pounds sterling for the best and comeliest of them. The Abyssinians are the

most prized of the African slaves, from their superior gentleness and intelligence; those of the Galla country are the most numerous and hardy. The former have well-shaped heads, beautiful eyes, an agreeable brown color, and shining smooth black tresses. The latter have low foreheads, crisp hair, sooty complexions, thick lips, and projecting jaws. It was like the change from night to morning, passing from these dingy crowds to the apartments of the white slaves from Georgia and Circassia. It was not without some difficulty I obtained admission into this department of the human bazaar. Its commodities are only purchased by the wealthy and powerful Mussulmans, and many are bought upon commission. They fetch from one hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds sterling; and, being so much more valuable than the Africans, are much more carefully tended. They reclined upon carpets, lightly but richly clad. They were, for the most part, exquisitely fair; but I was disappointed in their beauty. The sunny hair, and heaven-blue eyes, that in England produce such an angel-like and intellectual effect, seemed to me here mere flax and beads; and I left them to the "turbaned Turk" without a sigh—except, perhaps, a very little one for those far away, in mine own land, whose image they served, however faintly, to recall.

It is the usual custom of travellers, to pour forth a torrent of indignation on the slave markets of the east. Certainly they do not sound well; and far be it from me to become their advocate; nevertheless it is not just to paint the black prince blacker than he is, even when speaking of niggers. It is not fair to judge of the sufferings or sensations of these creatures, half man, half ourang-outang, by the standard of our own people. It is true they are only clothed with a blanket or a napkin, but that is the full-dress of their native land. They are fed on coarse flour-cakes and water, but that is the beef and beer of Ethiopia. Their domestic ties are broken, but they are not like *our* ties, whatever morbid philanthropy may say; and, if they were, the slave-dealer is only in the relation to them of a new-poor-law guardian unto us. They suffer hardship and cruelty, no doubt, during their passage of the desert, and down the Nile; but once they are purchased, they are treated with the same kindness, they have the same food and clothes as the free servant; and they have nothing of the stigma which is attached to their undeserved destiny in the free, and enlightened, and repudiating republic of America. It is to be considered, also, that they are, for the most part, prisoners of war, and exchange a cruel death for that servitude which is the lot of the freest of us all in one form or another. As for the Georgian and Circassian beauties, they have never learned what love or freedom means; they have been educated for exportation; their only ambition, like that of many fair maidens in hap-

pier lands, is to fetch a high price, and their only hope is to be first favorite in the hareem—*whose* hareem they care not.

Heaven forbid that I should attempt to defend the diabolical traffic in immortal beings! I only venture to exhibit the matter in the light in which it appears to the Mussulman, by which light alone he is to be judged. For my own part, I can truly say, that I have witnessed more melancholy sights in village church and city chapel, where orange-flowers wreathed, and jewels adorned, and bishops blessed a victim-bride, than in any slave-market of the east, from Cairo to Constantinople.

It is forbidden by the law of Mahomet to sell slaves to Christians, out of regard to their souls! We may smile at it, but we cannot scorn this consideration. Cairo is remarkable for latitudinarianism in matters of faith—but at Damascus, the traveller can only obtain admission to the slave-bazaar under the disguise of oriental costume. Even in the former city, however, the difficulty of access is daily increased, from the insults with which the slave-owners are overwhelmed by Christians, *after* they have satisfied their curiosity. These travellers should beware of relying too much on the ignorance of the African, for there are man-dealers and daughter-sellers in other lands than those of Egypt. * * * *

Here, you black scoundrel!—here is the price of that fair Georgian girl, whose eyes sparkle with the hope of being bought, and being free. Yet no—the transaction would be condemned as disreputable in *my* country, where I have just seen a wealthy worldling lead to the altar a richly-adorned, but unwilling bride, whose heart (and he knew it) was another's. Congratulations and honor showered upon his bargain, as reprobation would on my little transaction here. Yet the only difference is, that *his* purchase money was in settlements, and that his purchase was a free-born daughter of proud England.

But enough of this—let us hope we all know one, who acknowledges, in practice as well as in profession, that there is a world beyond our own; who prefers his child's happiness to an additional footman, and her peace of mind to a pair of leaders. May his days be many! May his white hairs shine, like a halo, in a happy home! and, in his dying hour, may he have nothing to reproach himself with, except not having made traffic of his daughter's love. * * * *

Here's a pretty homily about a respectable class of elderly gentlemen, with whom, thank heaven! in the course of a tolerably varied life, I have never had a dealing: nor am likely to have after this remonstrance, to look upon a man as man, not as a pocket.

I do not mean to assert that a coronet is not a most graceful appendage, and coin a most convenient element, in a marrying man; but a noble

heart, and a rich intellect are not utterly valueless, but to minds devoid of both. After all, it is no affair of mine, this English heart-market; I am neither a daughter nor a father—so, peace to the good, and repentance to the evil, and let us away to the quiet Nile, for

“We have many a distant path to tread,
By pensive fancy, not by fiction led.”

FRAGMENT.

On! come to me now, for my sorrows are past,
And the cloud on my heart is dissolv'd at last;
Spirit of Poesy, come from above,
Come, on the wings of nature and love!

Come, while the yellow light streams thro' the pane,
And the air is fresh with the morning rain,
And the wind is up with its sweet wild voice,
Like a song of sorrow that bids us rejoice.

Come, 'mid fancies gathering fast,
'Mid thoughts of the present, and thoughts of the past;
Oh! come to me now! 't is thy chosen hour,
And the spirits of evil no longer have power!

From Knight's Quarterly Magazine.

THE STOLEN KISS.

*Written in a Lady's Album by the late Abraham Gen-
tiam, Esq.*

SMOOTH'n be that brow—and chas'd the frown
Yet gathering to thy tardy will—
Nor think to awe my raptures down,
For anger makes thee lovelier still.

In vain thou wouldst compel the ire
But lightly felt, but faintly shown;
Thine eyes betray beneath their fire
The pardon thou wouldst blush to own.

Then, still that proudly swelling breast,
Softened that lovely, mantling cheek;
'T was but a Kiss, that well express'd
The tenderness I could not *speak*.

I ENVY thee, thou careless wind,
So light, so wild, thy wandering,
Thou hast no earthly chain to bind
One fetter on thine airy wing;—
I envy thee, thou careless wind!

The flower's first sigh of blossoming,
The harp's soft note, the woodlark's song,
All unto thee their treasures bring,
All to thy fairy reign belong;—
I envy thee, thou careless wind!

Thy jocund wing o'er ocean roves,
An echo to the sea-maid's lay;
Then, over rose and orange groves,
Thy fragrant breath exhales away;—
I envy thee, thou careless wind!

From the Monthly Magazine.

THE ANONYMOUS LETTER.

TO WRITE an anonymous letter is ungentlemanly; of this there can be no doubt—nay more, it is mean, dastardly, skulking, depraved! But what could I do! Colonel Plinth was about to marry his cook—

To write an anonymous letter is degrading, to say the least: it would require the skill of a sophist to render it justifiable—perhaps; and yet when Colonel Plinth was going to marry his cook—

A vixen—a perfect Saracen of a woman behind his back; and he a man of nice honor; who had gained golden laurels at Seringapatam—an aid-de-camp to Sir David Baird—my friend! The intelligence had come like a thunder-bolt.

To write an anonymous letter, except under the most imperative circumstances, is unquestionably atrocious. I felt that, even posited as I was—with the most benevolent intentions—conscience—*my* conscience, as a gentleman and an officer, would hesitate to approve of it. I paused—I determined to weigh the matter well; but the conviction fell upon me like an avalanche that not a moment was to be lost!—Colonel Plinth was on the eve of marrying his cook—

Rebecca Moggs! And he my brother-in-law—the widowed husband of my sainted sister—a K. C. B.—a wearer of four medals, two crosses, and the order of the golden fleece—a man who had received the thanks of Parliament—the written approbation of my Lord Clive—two freedoms in gold boxes—a man who, had he nobly fell on the ramparts of Tippoo's capital, would have been taken home in rum, and buried in St. Paul's.

His fragment—his living remains—for he possessed only one organ of a sort—having lost a leg, an arm, an eye, and a nostril—had resolved on what I considered a sort of demi-post mortem match, with—what!

A blowsy, underhung menial, whose only merit consisted in cooking mulligatawny, and rubbing with a soft, fat palm the wounded ankle of his partially efficient leg; the illegitimate offspring of a Sepoy pioneer's trull; a creature whom my lovely and accomplished sister had taken from the breast of her dead mother, (the woman—a camp-follower—received an iron ball in her brain from one of Tippoo's guerilla troops in the jungle,)—one whom Evadne had brought up, with maternal care, in her kitchen;—a scullion! And such a one to be Colonel Plinth's wife—to take the place of Evadne! Good God!

To write an anonymous letter is rather revolting; much may be said against it; it is one's *dernier resort*; still it has its advantages—and why neglect them! Had Colonel Plinth not been what he was—were he but a casual acquaintance or a mere friend—then indeed—

But he was my brother-in-law—my brother in arms—in a word, Colonel Plinth.

Had he been a man who would listen to reason—who was open to conviction—to whom one might venture to speak—why really—

But he was hot as curry;—yet not deficient in sense;—but dreadfully opinionated—techy—easily susceptible of feeling himself insulted—careful as to keeping his pistol-case in such a state as to be ready at a moment's notice—a being inflamed in body, soul, and complexion, by the spices and sun of the burning East.

To remonstrate with him would have been

absurd; he would have cut me down with his crutch:—he had amassed three thousand a-year.

To write an anonymous letter was not exactly the sort of thing; but why see him rush into a match which would dishonor himself, and shed a sort of retrospective shame on my sainted sister!

The cook was far from immaculate. A native-servant, whom I discharged at Calcutta for repeatedly staying out all night—but why expose the weak side of humanity!

And another young fellow of her acquaintance, whom I pardoned for having robbed me, on condition of his frankly confessing all his misdemeanors—

Besides, there was Larry the trumpeter—

And one or two more.

Under such circumstances—conscious of his infatuation, I ceased to waver: the end sanctified the means; and I wrote him an anonymous letter.

She, of course, would make a point of having children—and then where were my expectations!

Evadne had never been a mother; the Colonel was the only Plinth in the universe; and, posited as I was—Evadne being the link—I naturally had expectations.

To say nothing of being nine years my senior, he was a wreck—a fiery wreck, full of combustibles, burning gradually to the water's edge.

The sun of his happiness, would, as I felt, set forever, the moment he married such a creature as Moggs—innately vulgar—repulsive—double-chinned—tumid—protuberant. Social festivity was everything to Colonel Plinth; but who would dine with him, if his *ce-divant* cook were to carve!—Evadne's adopted; Larry the trumpeter's love! I could n't!

Therefore, under a sense of overwhelming duty to Colonel Plinth, I wrote him an anonymous letter.

Every precaution was taken; the hand was disguised—the paper such as I had never used; and, to crown all, I dropped the important document in a distant and very out-of-the-way post-office.

Conscious of perfect security—animated by the cause I had espoused, I played away upon him, from my masked battery, with prodigious vehemence. Reserve was out of the question; in an anonymous letter, the writer, of course, speaks out; this is its great advantage. I took a rapid review of his achievements—I recalled the accomplished Evadne to his mind's eye—I contrasted her with his present intended:—Larry the trumpeter figured in, and the forcible expression as to Cæsar's wife was not forgotten. I rebuked—I argued—I ridiculed—I scorned—I appealed to his pride—I mentioned his person. I bade him consult a *cheval* glass, and ask himself if the reflection were that of a would-be bridegroom. I told him how old he was—what the Indian army would think—in short, the letter carried upon the face of it the perfect conviction of a thirty-two pounder. Here and there I was literally ferocious.

I dined alone that day, and was taking my wine in the complacent consciousness of having done all in my power, when Colonel Plinth knocked. Of course I knew his knock: it was always violent; but on this occasion rather less so than usual. I felt flurried; as he ascended, my accurate ear detected a strange footstep on the stair. Hastily pouring out and gulping down a bumper, I contrived to rally before my friend entered.

Commonly his countenance was turbid—*billowy*—rufus—the red sea in a storm;—now it was

stony—pale—implacable; he was evidently *white hot* with wrath. His eye—usually lurid as that of a Cyclops at the forge—was cold—clear—icy; his look froze me—I had seen him thus before—in the breach at Seringapatam.

His salute was charmingly courteous; he begged leave to introduce a friend—Baron Cahooz, a noble Swede in the Prussian service. Never before had I beheld such a martinet—where could Plinth have picked him up!

The Baron, in very good English, expressed his concern at making so valuable an acquaintance as that of Major Mocassin under such infelicitous circumstances. Colonel Plinth had been insulted: but as I had so long been his most valued friend—as we had fought and bled on the same fields—as those arms (his right and my left) which had been so often linked together, were mouldering, side by side, in the same grave—as I was his brother-in-law, Colonel Plinth would accept of the amplest possible apology:—with any other man than Major Mocassin, Colonel Plinth would have gone to extremities at once.

I was petrified during this speech; but at its conclusion some sort of an inquiry staggered from my lips.

Baron Cahooz did not understand.

I declared myself to be in the same predicament:—would he be so good as to explain!

In reply, the Baron hinted that I must be conscious of having written Colonel Plinth a letter.

Fearing that Plinth's suspicions had been aroused, and that this was a *ruse* to trap me into a confession—remembering my precautions—and feeling sure that nothing could, by any possibility, be brought home to me, unless I turned traitor to myself—I denied the imputation point blank! Indeed, what else could I do!

Colonel Plinth uttered an exclamation of bitter contempt, and hobbled towards the door.

Baron Cahooz handed me his card:—nothing further could be done:—he hoped the friend whom I might honor on the occasion would see him as early as possible, in order to expedite the necessary arrangements.

I made a last effort. Advancing towards the door, where Plinth stood, I begged to protest that I was mystified—that he must be laboring under a mistake.

"A mistake!" shouted he, in that tremendous tone, which for a moment had once appalled the tiger-hearted Tippoo—"A mistake, Major Mocassin! There's no mistake, sirrah! Will you deny your own hand-writing!"

So saying, he threw the letter in my face, and retired, followed by Cahooz.

In another moment the veil was torn asunder. Having never before attempted an anonymous letter, and acting under the influence of confirmed habit, I had concluded the fatal epistle, without disguise, in my customary terms:—"Yours, ever, JOHN MOCASSIN!"

NOTE.

The foregoing paper was drawn up and sent to his cousin in Kentucky by Major Mocassin, a few hours after Colonel Plinth and Baron Cahooz had quitted him. On the inside of the envelop appears the following:—"T is now midnight—Rear Admiral Jenkinson has settled every thing with the Baron, to their mutual satisfaction; we are to be on the ground by six in the morning. If I fall—"

After considerable research, we have discovered

two announcements in the public prints, which form valuable appendages to Major Mocassin's document. The first extract is from a London journal, published in 1819; the second, from a Bath paper of two years later date.

No. I.

"Yesterday, at his own residence in Wimpole street, by special license, Colonel Plinth, K. C. B., to Rebecca Louisa Moggs, a native of Masulipatam. The gallant Colonel went through the ceremony with his only remaining arm in a sling—having a few hours before exchanged shots—both of which took effect—with Major Mocassin."

No. II.

"The busy tongue of fame reports that a gallant Major, who served with distinction, and lost an arm, under Sir David Baird, in the East Indies, is about to lead to the altar the dashing relict and sole legatee of a brave and affluent brother officer, who recently died at Cheltenham. A mutual attachment is supposed to have been long in existence; for the bridegroom elect fought a duel on the lady's account, with her late husband, on the very morning of the marriage. Pecuniary motives may perhaps have influenced the fair one in giving her hand on that occasion to the gallant Major's more fortunate rival."

From the Independent Weekly Press.

The following beautiful charade is worthy of the distinguished poet whose name it signifies:

Come from my First—aye come!

The battle dawn is nigh;

And the screaming trump, and the thundering drum,

Are calling thee to die!

Fight as thy father fought,

Fall as thy father fell;

Thy task is taught, thy shroud is wrought,

So farewell!—and farewell!

Toll ye my Second!—toll!

Fling high the flambeau's light;

And sing the hymn of a parted soul,

Beneath the silent night!

The wreath upon his head,

The cross upon his breast,—

Let the prayer be said, and the tear be shed;

So—take him to his rest.

Call ye my Whole—aye call

The lord of lute and lay!

And let him greet the sable pall

With a noble song to-day.

Go, call him by his name;

No fitter hand may crave

To light the flame of a soldier's fame

On the turf of a soldier's grave.

WHEN heavenly sounds about my ears,

Like winds through Eden's tree-tops, rise—

And make me, though my spirit hears,

For very luxury close my eyes;—

Let none but friends be round about,

Who love the soothing joy like me;

That so the charm be felt throughout,

And all be harmony.

[It was said that the Queen was to have a billiard table made out of the timbers of the Royal George—on which Punch presents the following petition.]

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY :

Although of a humble stock, and although my wife, Madam Judy, has not been presented at your Majesty's court, yet we humbly declare that the whole court doth not contain two more loyal and duteous subjects.

May it please your Majesty, we are very old ; we have been in the custom of mixing for centuries past with every class of the people of this kingdom, and we are enemies to no manner of sport wherewith they amuse themselves.

Billiards, among others, is a good sport. It has the privilege of uniting many honorable gentlemen daily together of the army, of the universities, and of the swell mob, at the watering-places. It has the eminent merit of leading to the detection of many rogues and swindlers ; it keeps many ingenious markers, brandy-merchants, and soda-water venders in honorable maintenance, and is a great aid and patron of the tobacco trade, thereby vastly increasing the revenues of your Majesty's government.

With that sport then we are far from quarrelling. But there is for this and for all other games a time and place. Thus in the late Mr. Hogarth's facetious print (I knew the gentleman very well) the Beadle is represented as caning "the Idle Apprentice" for playing at marbles—no, not for playing at marbles, but playing on a grave-stone during Sunday service. In like manner, were I to set up my show before St. James's Church during service hours, or under your Majesty's triumphal arch at Pimlico, or in the Bishop of London's drawing-room—it is likely, not that the Beadle would cane me, for that I would resist, but that persons in blue habiliments, oil-skin hatted, white-lettered, and pewter-buttoned—policemen in a word, would carry me before one of your Majesty's justices of the peace. My crime would be, not the performance of my tragedy of "Punch"—but its performance in an improper manner and time.

Ah, Madame ! Take this apologue into your royal consideration, and recollect that as is Punch and marbles so are BILLIARDS.

They too may be played at a wrong place. If it is wrong to play at marbles on a tombstone, is it just to play at billiards on a coffin—an indifferent coffin—anybody's coffin ! Is such a sport quite just, feeling, decorous, and honorable ?

Perhaps your Majesty is not aware, what the wreck of the Royal George really is. Sixty years ago its fate made no small sensation. Eight hundred gallant men, your royal grandfather's subjects, went down to death in that great ship. The whole realm of England was stirred and terrified by their awful fate—the clergy spoke of it from their pulpits—the greatest poet then alive wrote one of the noblest ballads in our language, which

as long as the language will endure shall perpetuate the melancholy story. Would your Majesty wish Mr. Thomas Campbell to continue the work of Mr. William Cowper, and tell what has *now* become of the wreck ? Lo ! it is a billiard-table, over which his Royal Highness the Prince de Joinville may be knocking about red balls and yellow—or his Serenity the Prince of Hohenzollen Sigmaringen may be caramboling with his coat off. Ah, Madame ! may your royal fingers never touch a cue ; it is a losing hazard that you will play at that board.

The papers say there is somewhere engraved in copper on the table, a "suitable inscription." What is it ! I fancy it might run thus :—

"THIS BILLIARD TABLE IS FORMED OF PART OF THE
TIMBERS
OF THE ROYAL GEORGE MAN-OF-WAR, OF 100 GUNS,
WHICH WENT DOWN ON THE 29TH AUGUST, 1782.
EIGHT HUNDRED SEAMEN PERISHED ON BOARD,
IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY AND THEIR KING.
HONOR BE TO THE BRAVE WHO DIE IN SUCH A SERVICE.
AS A FITTING MARK OF HER SENSE OF THESE BRAVE MEN'S
MISFORTUNES,
AS A TESTIMONY OF SYMPATHY FOR THEIR FATE,
AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO ENGLISHMEN
TO BRAVE THEIR LIVES IN SIMILAR PERILS,
IN HOPES THAT FUTURE SOVEREIGNS
MAY AWARD THEM SIMILAR DELICATE SYMPATHY ;
ABOVE ALL, AS A STERN MONUMENT
OF THE VANITY OF MILITARY GLORY,
THE USELESSNESS OF AMBITION,
AND THE FOLLY OF FIDELITY,
WHICH EXPECTS ANY REWARD BUT ITSELF,
HER MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA,
HAS GRACIOUSLY CAUSED THIS PLAY-TABLE TO BE MADE
FROM THE TIMBERS OF
THE FAITHFUL, USELESS, WORN-OUT OLD VESSEL."

We stop the press, to announce that the billiard-table out of the *Royal George* has been countermanded, and that the remaining cart-loads of timber have been purchased to decorate the new chapel at Windsor Castle.

STANZAS.

Yes—labor, love ! and toil would please,
Were toil and labor borne for thee ;
And fortune's nursling, lapped on ease,
In wealth of heart be poor to me !

Why should I pant for sordid gain ?
Or why Ambition's voice believe ?
Since, dearest, thou dost not disdain
The only gift I have to give.

Time would with speed of lightning flee,
And every hour a comfort bring,
And days and years employed for thee
Shake pleasures from their passing wing.

CAMŒNS.